

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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IN RE: :
 :
THE EL FARO INCIDENT OFF THE: NTSB Accident No.
COAST OF THE BAHAMAS ON : DCA16MM001
OCTOBER 1, 2015 :
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INTERVIEW OF: BROR ERIC AXELSSON, III

Tuesday,
November 3, 2015

Axelsson Residence
Cape May, New Jersey

BEFORE:

MICHAEL KUCHARSKI, Esq., NTSB Investigator
CARRIE BELL, NTSB

This transcript was produced from audio
provided by the National Transportation Safety Board.

APPEARANCES

LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] U.S. Coast Guard
Operations Group
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PRESENT ON BEHALF OF THE INTERVIEWEE:

TIM AXELSSON, Personal Representative
Atlantic City, New Jersey

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (10:42 a.m.)

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. Good
4 morning, everyone. My name is Mike Kucharski, and I'm
5 with the National Transportation Safety Board and I am
6 the Operations Group Chairman.

7 We're here today to interview Captain Eric
8 Axelsson, and this interview relates to the El Faro
9 incident, the loss of the El Faro, and we're here to
10 determine, ultimately, the NTSB is to determine
11 probable cause in this accident. Before I go any
12 further, Captain Axelsson, I have the recorder on, do
13 you mind if I record this, this interview?

14 RESPONDENT: No.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. Earlier on,
16 I'd mention that this recording will be transcribed and
17 you will be sent a copy of it, to review, and the
18 transcript, as all our transcripts, will be made, put
19 on the public docket and their access for anyone to
20 look at, the public to look at.

21 The parties to this investigation are, of
22 course, the NTSB, the United States Coast Guard, Totem,
23 Totem Services, Incorporated, and the American Bureau
24 of Shipping. We will also share this interview with
25 them, the transcript, right after it comes back and you

1 get the chance to review it.

2 I mentioned earlier that we, the NTSB is
3 tasked by Congress, to determine probable cause in the
4 accident. We don't assess any blame, as far as which
5 would possibly result in enforcement action.

6 We have no enforcement powers, we just try
7 to determine probable cause, send out the
8 recommendations, if there are, and try to develop the
9 recommendations, so that they prevent these accidents
10 from happening in the future. Any questions, so far,
11 Captain?

12 RESPONDENT: No.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. I'd like to
14 go around the room. I mentioned, my name is Mike
15 Kucharski, and go around the room, so we can identify
16 ourselves.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. I am [REDACTED]
18 from the U.S. Coast Guard. I'm also a member of the
19 Operations Group, Specializing in stability and
20 structure.

21 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Carrie Bell, NTSB, Human
22 Performance Group Chairman.

23 MR. TIM AXELSSON: Tim Axelsson, brother to
24 Eric Axelsson.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And, Tim, I

1 understand that you're here, as Eric's Personal
2 Representative, right?

3 MR. TIM AXELSSON: Yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

5 MR. TIM AXELSSON: That's correct.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I forgot to mention
7 that, Captain, is that, you're allowed to have a
8 Personal Representative, and you've chosen Tim to be
9 such?

10 (Off microphone discussion)

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So let it note that
12 it's about 10:42 a.m. on Tuesday, the 3rd of November,
13 and we're at Captain Axelsson's home in, in Cape May,
14 New Jersey. Captain, for the record, would you spell
15 your complete name for us?

16 RESPONDENT: My first name is Bror, B-R-O-R,
17 middle name is Eric, E-R-I-C, and my last name is
18 Axelsson, A-X-E-L-S-S-O-N, and I'm the Third.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Third, thank you.

20 (Off microphone discussion)

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Eric, give us your
22 background, Maritime related, you know, schooling and
23 sailing experience.

24 RESPONDENT: Well, I, 1976 I attended SUNY
25 Maritime College, at Fort Schuyler. And I went on and

1 I got my Third Mate's license and I sailed, initially,
2 on a break bulk, combination break bulk container
3 ships, until the, I guess, the bottom fell out around
4 '84, '85.

5 And then I went back to the, to the fishing.
6 We were, my family, were all fishermen. We had a, a
7 wharf. So I worked at the, with my father and my
8 brother, here, for about another five or six years,
9 something like that, until I went back sailing sometime
10 around 1990.

11 And then, I've been sailing continuously
12 since then, since 1990. I've been on tankers,
13 container ships, car carriers. And now, this
14 combination RORO container ship.

15 And, recently, I thought I was going to
16 retire and I left the ship August 4th. And I was
17 looking to retire from the industry, to move on and
18 seek other opportunities.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Well you mentioned
20 that you got out of school in 1980 and then you sailed
21 until the bottom fell out. Did you sail with any
22 union, or anything like that?

23 RESPONDENT: I was with the AMO Union, yes.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And you did that
25 from when you got out of school in 1980?

1 RESPONDENT: Correct.

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And what
3 type of ships, from that period, did you sail on? You
4 mentioned break bulk, was it all break bulk ships?

5 RESPONDENT: It was, the company had three
6 ships and they were a combination, break bulk
7 container, and I sailed on one of them for, I want to
8 say, about four years.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: What company was
10 that?

11 MR. TIM AXELSSON: American Atlantic.

12 RESPONDENT: American Atlantic Lines.
13 American Atlantic Lines, up in New York.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Is it one of those
15 smaller ships down to South America type runs?

16 RESPONDENT: Yes. We used to run East
17 Coast, United States and then, down through the
18 Caribbean and then, used to run Trinidad, Guyana,
19 Paramaribo. And then we used to go up, about a 1,000
20 miles, up the Amazon to Manaus.

21 And then come down through the furrows to
22 Belem. And, we used to leave Belem and, sometimes,
23 head to Barbados. And then, sometimes to Alabama, or
24 straight up to, I want to say, either, Savannah, or New
25 York, back to New York.

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And those were,
2 they were break bulk and roll-on/roll-off, or?

3 RESPONDENT: No.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Well, what were --

5 RESPONDENT: They were strictly, they were
6 break bulk and then we could put containers on deck.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

8 RESPONDENT: Or you could put some
9 containers in the hold, but you, you know, they were
10 like a combination.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The --

12 RESPONDENT: Three hundred-foot ships.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Three hundred feet
14 long, okay.

15 RESPONDENT: Yes.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So they are little
17 small.

18 RESPONDENT: They had stick booms, they have
19 to stick boom forward and then, then two Hagglund
20 cranes. Yes.

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I'm just going to
22 stop for a second here, and see, when we have this
23 transcribed, you can imagine all these things, Hagglund
24 cranes and stick booms and all these types of things
25 where, you know, and somebody is trying to transcribe

1 this thing, what was he actually saying, so that's why
2 we go through this process. Okay, so then you came and
3 you worked in the fishing industry. And then you said
4 you went back, about 1990, back out to sea?

5 RESPONDENT: Yes. I want to say, somewhere
6 around 1990.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And then, so you
8 went back to sail with AMO, is that correct?

9 RESPONDENT: I was back with AMO, yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay, and where did
11 you sail then, what types of ships, the companies, what
12 you can remember?

13 RESPONDENT: Well, I think about, actually,
14 I went back to work with Crowley. Crowley had the
15 container ships, he had, I think, three of them. And I
16 made a trip on one of those. It was a container and
17 then it had a garage back aft with a stern wrap, so you
18 could take roll-on cargo, roll-on/roll-off cargo. And
19 all of the floor deck was containers, above and below.

20 And I made, I made a trip there. And then,
21 the first Persian Gulf War broke out. I just got off
22 the ship and I got called back to go to the Cape Henry,
23 so I was on the Cape Henry for a trip. You know, I was
24 on there for a little while.

25 And I got off of the Cape Henry and got

1 moved right over to the Cape Edmont, going to the
2 Persian Gulf, during the first Persian Gulf War.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And they were what
4 type of ships did they have in the Edmont?

5 RESPONDENT: Well they, the Cape Henry was,
6 she, ah, she was a roll-on/roll-off. She was a
7 roll-on/roll-off, as the Cape Edmont, she was the same,
8 she was a roll-on/roll-off, on deck and below deck.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And were they
10 carrying mostly military cargos?

11 RESPONDENT: Correct, they were carrying
12 military cargo.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And the Crowley
14 ship you mentioned that had containers up forward,
15 mostly, top to bottom, and the roll-on/roll-off from
16 the stern, was it just the aft, or decks, below decks
17 that were roll-on/roll-off cargo?

18
19 RESPONDENT: It was after the house, yes.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: After the house.

21 RESPONDENT: It had a garage. It was small.

22 It was --

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: About how many --

24 RESPONDENT: -- small.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was it mostly

1 autos, was it trailers, what was it?

2 RESPONDENT: Trailers, autos, tractors, farm
3 equipment, bulldozers, I've seen them on there. But it

4 --

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was that --

6 RESPONDENT: -- it wasn't a very good
7 garage.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: A garage?

9 RESPONDENT: No.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was it most, but
11 that was a general-type cargo, was it military cargo?

12 RESPONDENT: No, no it was general.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: General, okay.

14 RESPONDENT: She was running East Coast and
15 then on to South America.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. So then,
17 after the Edmont, where did you go to next, after the
18 --

19 RESPONDENT: After the Edmont, I was on the
20 UST Pacific that I picked up in Malaysia and I stayed
21 on her until they sold her, I rode the UST Pacific.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: She was about
23 395,000 dead weight?

24 RESPONDENT: Three hundred and Ninety-nine
25 thousand.

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Three Ninety-nine.

2 RESPONDENT: Yes.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I'll tell you about
4 that afterwards.

5 RESPONDENT: Yes. And then, she got, then
6 they sold her. And then I, I babysat the Harkness.
7 She was a conversation that, because I was out of, we
8 were all out of work, at that point.

9 And so I was on the, I guess, the Harkness
10 was over in the Brooklyn shipyard. And, I guess, there
11 were some problems with the conversion, because it was
12 going to be the school ship, I believe, for the State
13 of Maine.

14 And they brought her over to Bayonne and I
15 stayed there for five months. And they towed her back
16 down to James River, I think, she went to and laid her
17 up.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Were you like a
19 Night Mate on there, or were you Chief Mate?

20 RESPONDENT: I was there only during the
21 week. Actually, I ended up stripping the ship. I
22 stripped all the electronics off, the antennas. I
23 stripped all the, they gave me a container, they backed
24 it up the, to the ship.

25 And I had a crane, cherry picker, more or

1 less. And I stripped as much, as I could, off it,
2 packed it all up, identified it all, put all the
3 packing receipts in there, send it all to InterOcean.

4 And I've just filled a container up with all
5 the safety equipment, the fire extinguisher, I stripped
6 everything off there I could take, off the bridge, as
7 she was outfitted.

8 So I went down to, and after I filled it,
9 after I was completed, they, they took the container
10 down to Virginia where they had another ship they were
11 going to put it on for the State of Maine, and they
12 used all of it onboard that ship.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So back to when you
14 first went on the, I forget what was before the Edmont.

15 RESPONDENT: I was on the Cape Henry.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Cape Henry. Was
17 Cape Henry operated by InterOcean?

18 RESPONDENT: It was.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay, so -- and
20 Crowley was operated by Crowley?

21 RESPONDENT: By Crowley.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So would that be a
23 fair assessment to say that you, that's when you
24 started to work for InterOcean back on the, the Cape
25 Henry?

1 RESPONDENT: That's when I first was
2 introduced to Interocean.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

4 RESPONDENT: That was the first time I ever
5 worked for them, yes.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And then, after
7 that, the Edmont, was that managed by Interocean?

8 RESPONDENT: That was Interocean.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was the UST
10 managed, the UST --

11 RESPONDENT: That was --

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- Pacific?

13 RESPONDENT: That was Interocean.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Interocean, okay.
15 And the Pacific was a tanker, up to that time, had you
16 been on tankers, until you got to the Pacific?

17 RESPONDENT: I think I've, let me think. I
18 made one trip with fresh tankers, sometime in, I'm
19 going to say '85. I was on there, I just took an AB's
20 job. And, and there was just one trip. And I, I went
21 back fishing, after that.

22 It was just a coast, a coast watch trip, I
23 filled in. That was all, I don't know, about 70 days,
24 something like that. I believe, it was 70 days, it
25 wasn't long. And I got off and I went back to the fish

1 house, went back fishing.

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So then after the
3 Atlantic, what was after the Atlantic, then?

4 RESPONDENT: Okay --

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And that run, could
6 you just, the basic run that you did on there.

7 RESPONDENT: What ship is that?

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Atlantic, Pacific,
9 I'm sorry, Pacific.

10 RESPONDENT: The UST Pacific?

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

12 RESPONDENT: On the UST Pacific, I picked
13 that up in Malaysia. And then, we were, pretty much,
14 tramping, running from Ras Tanura, Saudi Arabia. We go
15 down around Cape of Good Hope, sometimes up to the Gulf
16 of Mexico, or on to Antifer, France.

17 And then, she did a couple of shuttle runs
18 from Yanbu to Ain Sukhna, which I wasn't on, at the
19 time. And, but I was on the, when we ran from Ras
20 Tanura up to Ain Sukhna, in Egypt, I made those, I made
21 some of those voyages.

22 And I did the, let me see, we ran up to
23 Sullom Voe. We took a, we took a partial load out of
24 Sullom Voe and got out of there and went down to Lyme
25 Bay and laid her, and that's where we topped her up, in

1 Lyme Bay, until we had the three --

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The South Coast of
3 England there?

4 RESPONDENT: The South Coast of England,
5 yes.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Now just, could you
7 tell us the length and draft and beam of the Pacific?

8 RESPONDENT: No.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: About.

10 RESPONDENT: Geeze, man. That's years ago.
11 Yes.

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: It was like about,
13 about 1,200 feet long, about a --

14 RESPONDENT: Just shy of --

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- 90-foot draft?

16 RESPONDENT: No she wasn't that deep.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No?

18 RESPONDENT: No. I, as far as I can
19 recollect, sometime, somewhere around 75, or 77 --

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Two Hundred
21 Twenty-Five-foot beam, give or take a few feet?

22 RESPONDENT: Yes. Yes, sir. That was a lot
23 of years ago. Yes.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

25 RESPONDENT: And, yes, let me see, after the

1 Harkness I went --

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: What were you
3 sailing on the, say, from the Cape Henry to the Edmont,
4 what was your position on those ships?

5 RESPONDENT: I was, let's see, the Cape
6 Henry, Third Mate, I want to say. I think I was a
7 Second Mate on the Edmont. Then I, I want to say,
8 Third Mate on the UST Pacific. Later on, I went Second
9 Mate. I was Second Mate there, and then she was sold.
10 Yes.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. Then after
12 the Pacific, where did you go to next?

13 RESPONDENT: That's when I did the Harkness.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The Harkness, okay.

15 RESPONDENT: The Harkness, I just babysat
16 that ship, just, and then I stripped it, eventually.
17 With, you know, electronics, safety equipment. It was
18 like a 20-foot container. And I packed everything up
19 in boxes and put the manuals, the antennas, I had
20 everything tagged, boxed up.

21 And then, I winterized her, too. That's
22 right. I had to go get the, the stuff you put in the
23 RV, you know, your RVs, to winterize it, that
24 antifreeze?

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Oh.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Oh yes.

2 RESPONDENT: It's a certain kind of stuff
3 you put in there.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

5 RESPONDENT: And I, yes, I winterized all
6 the sinks, the toilets, the traps, that type of thing.
7 And then they towed her away. And then, let me see, I
8 was, I was out of work. And I was out of work after
9 that.

10 And I think I made a trip on the, yes we
11 made it, I think, after that, I made a trip on a grain
12 ship, OMI, I think. And I made one voyage, one voyage.
13 And I left, I left there -- oh yes, and I think,
14 Interocean called me up and I went to work on the
15 Brooks Range, so I was on the Brooks Range. I went
16 there, as Third Mate.

17 And later on I went, as a Second Mate. Yes.
18 But that was only a short time, because she,
19 eventually, was laid up and taken out of service. They
20 were going to put new four bodies and all, but that
21 didn't pan out, so they, they were out of service. And
22 then I was out of work again.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And the books range
24 was what type of ship?

25 RESPONDENT: She was another tanker. She

1 was a tanker.

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: About 165,000 --

3 RESPONDENT: Jeeze.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- deadweight,
5 911-foot beam?

6 RESPONDENT: You're testing my memory.
7 That's going back seven years, as well.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Sorry, all these
9 ships I was on, either as Mate, or, besides, I remember
10 these, you know, the figures like the --

11 RESPONDENT: Yes. Well, she was, yes, I
12 think she held a million. I think she held around a
13 million, it runs in my mind, a million barrels.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: A million barrels?

15 RESPONDENT: Yes.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

17 RESPONDENT: I believe. But that's testing
18 my memory. And, I don't know, and then after that, I
19 was out of work again. And then, I don't know what I
20 did, I was out of work. And I was probably back down
21 to the, the fish house. I don't know, I don't know
22 what I did. I really don't. Let me think.

23 MR. TIM AXELSSON: Was that the '90s?

24 RESPONDENT: Yes. That had to be around, I
25 guess, '95, I don't know, '96? I don't know. I can't

1 recall. But, eventually, I went to work for Maersk
2 Limited.

3 They were re-flagging the C and T Class.
4 That was the first ships they were re-flagging for the,
5 for the container trade in the United States. So I
6 went to work there. I was Chief Mate on the, yes,
7 Maersk Travel, Colorado. And, I think, she was, I'm
8 guessing, 1,500 TEU, I guess, somewhere around there.

9 But she had a crane, a gantry, a lead year
10 crane, I remember that. And we were on the East Coast,
11 south of the United States down to South America, on
12 the west side, and then up to LA, and then we just did
13 a reverse coming back to the East Coast from LA. And I
14 did that, I guess, five years.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay, so you were
16 five years, as Chief Mate on the Maersk Colorado?

17 RESPONDENT: Yes.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And that was just
19 straight container?

20 RESPONDENT: She was pure container in a
21 pure container liner trade, yes.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Type of engine on
23 there, is it steam, or diesel?

24 RESPONDENT: She was diesel.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Diesel.

1 RESPONDENT: She was diesel.

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Single screw?

3 RESPONDENT: Single screw, yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Bridge control?

5 RESPONDENT: Yes.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Any thrusters on
7 there?

8 RESPONDENT: Bow and stern runs in my mind.
9 Bow, bow thruster, for sure, and I believe she had a
10 stern thruster, as well.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was it controllable
12 pitch, or was it direct drive?

13 RESPONDENT: No, direct.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

15 RESPONDENT: No, uncontrollable.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: About the overall,
17 do you remember the length, about? It's about the same
18 size as the El Faro?

19 RESPONDENT: No.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: She was --

21 RESPONDENT: She was smaller. I'm guessing,
22 around 575, runs in my mind. She was under six-foot,
23 I'm pretty sure. But I'm not certain of that, it was a
24 lot of years ago, as well.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Well, it's just

1 good to say that, you know, 500,000 that type gives us
2 an idea of -- okay, so after the Maersk Colorado?

3 RESPONDENT: That's when I, I'm getting, I'm
4 not sure if that was the, I believe, I got pulled off
5 of there and they asked me to go to the Maersk Arizona.
6 She was in Dubai, which I declined to go, as Master.
7 But then, I went down for an interview, they called me
8 down. They told me it was in my best interest to come
9 down. Okay. So I went down.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And when you say
11 they, is it Maersk, or was it the --

12 RESPONDENT: That was Maersk.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

14 RESPONDENT: And it was in a conference room
15 with three other people and I went, I went. I said I
16 would do one trip. And they didn't tell me everything,
17 just that the ship was in Dubai and it was at a
18 conversion, not a conversion when I say conversion, not
19 in the sense you're thinking, it was coming out of the
20 grain trade and they were putting it back into the
21 container trade. She was a container ship with a
22 garage, as well.

23 So I, they told me they wanted somebody on
24 there, who knew something about containers. I said,
25 well, you know, I ended up going. And I flew into

1 Dubai. There was nobody there to meet me. They told
2 me, just go to the hotel. They gave me an address. I
3 did.

4 I got there, I remember it, I got there at 1
5 o'clock in the morning and they didn't have a room for
6 me. And I didn't know what was going on. And I
7 remember the, a guy tapping me on the shoulder. And he
8 said, are you Bror? And I said yes I am.

9 And I said, who are you? And they were the
10 Port Captains from Denmark, representing Maersk. And I
11 said, great, tell him I got a hotel room, he says, no
12 you do not. He said you had to pay for this with your
13 own credit card. And I said, why? He said, because
14 nobody knows you're here.

15 And I said, well okay, what's going on? He
16 said, go put your stuff in your room and come on down.
17 Now there was a port engineer there, as well. And I
18 remember, we had a beer and I said, what's going on?
19 And he said, nobody knows you're here. We don't want
20 anybody to know you're here.

21 And I said well who, is there anybody else
22 here that will be joining this ship? And he said, no.
23 We're going down at 8 o'clock in the morning. And I
24 said, well, anyway.

25 We went down. And that's when I found out

1 what was going on, what happened. And that's when, I
2 knew the captain, which I didn't know he was there, at
3 the time, but I was there to relieve him and he didn't
4 know I was coming, either, and it was a guy I knew for
5 20 some odd years.

6 But the ship just went through a COI, the
7 day before, or that morning, 87 835s and a five-page
8 work list from the United States Coast Guard. And that
9 --

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So you went on to
11 relieve him, as Master?

12 RESPONDENT: I did. I had, actually, I told
13 him, don't sign out, because I don't know if I'm going
14 to stay, I might be leaving. I didn't know. I wasn't
15 informed of any of that, and that's, I ended up
16 staying.

17 We shuttled the Persian Gulf. And that
18 would have been the, that's the second Gulf War, at the
19 time. Yes, it was the second Gulf War, and that's when
20 I, we were running, we were shuttling the Persian Gulf.

21 We were running Dubai, Jebel Ali, Abu Dhabi,
22 Ad-Dammam, over to Bahrain. I did the two ports in
23 Kuwait, and then left Kuwait City and went up to Zubair
24 Iraq. We were running up there, to Zubair, and I
25 stayed there 87 days. That was when the last 835 was

1 cleared, the five-page work list was gone, and I, I
2 left. Never went back.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So that, so it was
4 successfully, eventually, successfully --

5 RESPONDENT: It was done.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- brought back
7 into the container trade from the grain trade?

8 RESPONDENT: And the men I dealt with was
9 Jason Smith and Mike Delorey, at every port. I know
10 them well. They're, that is something I'll never
11 forget. That I won't.

12 But it was done. The job was done. They
13 got that -- it took me 87 days. It was 87 835s and a
14 five-page work list and it was cleaned up and I left
15 and I never went back.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Oh, so you never
17 went back to work for Maersk, or --

18 RESPONDENT: I never went back to the Maersk
19 Arizona.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Arizona.

21 RESPONDENT: They wanted me to, but I
22 refused. Yes, I refused. And then, they were
23 re-flagging the, that was when the G Class was coming
24 online with Maersk Line, Ltd.

25 They re-flagged the Gs, the Cs and Ts went

1 away, the G Class was just coming out, and I wanted to
2 be part of the G Class, was why I didn't want to go
3 back to the Maersk Arizona, I wanted to try the G
4 Class. I know they were 4,300 TEU, they were the
5 bigger class, so I stayed there.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So in comparison,
7 4,300 TEU, and just for the record, that's a 20-foot
8 equivalent unit --

9 RESPONDENT: Yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- STEU?

11 RESPONDENT: She was about that, I may be a
12 bit off the number, she was around 4,300 TEU. Yes.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And give us an
14 idea, comparison and size to the El Yunque, or the El
15 Faro.

16 RESPONDENT: She was bigger. She was, the
17 Gs, were somewhere, I'm going to say, they were under
18 1,000, so they had to be around, I think they were
19 nine, 950, 955, I would guess, somewhere in there.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: A pretty big ship.

21 RESPONDENT: Yes, I (inaudible), okay.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And, tell us
23 about the plan, diesel?

24 RESPONDENT: Diesel.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Bridge?

1 RESPONDENT: She was a diesel ship, bridge
2 control.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Bridge control,
4 thrusters on her?

5 RESPONDENT: Yes. She, yes, they had bow
6 and stern thrusters, I'm pretty confident they did,
7 yes.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

9 RESPONDENT: She had bow and stern.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And, again, that
11 was direct drive?

12 RESPONDENT: Yes --

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Slow speed?

14 RESPONDENT: -- bridge control.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Medium speed?

16 RESPONDENT: I'm not sure. I can't, I can't
17 recall that.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And did you go on
19 board her, as Master?

20 RESPONDENT: No, I was Chief Mate. I was
21 Chief Mate on the Colorado and Chief Mate on the G
22 Class.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And, I'm
24 sorry, I missed the name on the first G Class ship, do
25 you remember it?

1 RESPONDENT: I didn't mention it. It was
2 the Georgia.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The Georgia? Okay.

4 RESPONDENT: I was on the Georgia and the
5 Carolina, the Maersk Carolina.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

7 RESPONDENT: I was on two.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And how, roughly,
9 how much time on those two ships?

10 RESPONDENT: Oh jeeze, I, I think I was, no
11 I didn't think, no, I guess, the, the Georgia. I'm
12 not, I'm not certain. Two years? Because they pulled
13 me off again. Yes, I guess, it was about that time.
14 They pulled me off again to go Master on the, there was
15 another one, to go onto Carter.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Oh yes.

17 RESPONDENT: This is after, that was after
18 the incident at Sunny Point.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And the Carter was,
20 is that an ammo ship?

21 RESPONDENT: She was an ammo ship. She was
22 in Diego Garcia when I picked her up. In fact, I got,
23 I got, I flew into Diego Garcia and that was the ship,
24 the only ship I ever had to board and relieve the
25 captain by the sea buoy. I went up and he went down.

1 So yes, so I did the Carter for, I don't want to say, I
2 did the four months, so it must have been 125, 130
3 days, I guess, I was there at Diego with the Carter.

4 And then, they put me back on the, that's
5 where I got, I picked up the Maersk Carolina, as Chief
6 Mate. I came back to the G Class. Yes, I was on the
7 Maersk Carolina.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So the Carter was,
9 that was a Maersk ship, operating ship?

10 RESPONDENT: The Carter was, Maersk was the
11 operating (inaudible), correct.

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. Okay.

13 RESPONDENT: That was, that was Maersk. And
14 then, let me see, after that, after the Maersk
15 Carolina, I guess, it was sometime around '05, I guess,
16 somewhere in there.

17 Interocean called me up and they were
18 re-flagging those car carriers, for ARC. That was ARC.
19 They were doing ARC, ARC car carriers. So I went, they
20 were on the northern, they had a ship that was on the
21 northern European run, and I had been on the Middle
22 East run for a lot of years, so I thought I'd want to
23 try the car carriers.

24 Never been on one, so oh jeeze, you know,
25 I'll try it. They were re-flagging, they had a Chief

1 Mate slot, so, they had Northern European, so that's
2 what I did, I went on the Courage.

3 And later on, I went as a Master on there,
4 on the Courage. And I don't know, I guess, it was,
5 yes, to about '08, I don't know, somewhere in there, I
6 guess. That's when the first crash came. Was that
7 '08?

8 The market crashed and, and that's when we
9 were supposed to, all, either take your retirement and
10 leave, or stay in and take cents on the dollar. So I
11 elected to retire, to leave.

12 So I had my time in the Union in, but I
13 didn't have enough time to get the buyout, I missed it
14 by a year, couldn't get it. A year-and-a-half, I
15 guess, I fell short, days of service, years of service,
16 plus your age, I didn't make the 75, I think I was
17 73-and-a-half, so I couldn't get the buyout.

18 So then, I guess, they got inundated with so
19 many people retiring, they kept changing the policy of
20 what was going to happen. So I had, anyway, some guys
21 left, I ended up being able to stay in, I stayed in and
22 I went, actually that was, my wife can be persuasive.

23 I did, I did come home to retire. I showed
24 up at the house. I got off and, well we had to, it was
25 either take the retirement, or take cents on the

1 dollar, at the time, that was the deal. And I said,
2 well, I want all my money. I'd rather go ahead and
3 retire. I'll do something else.

4 So I, I didn't tell my wife, I got off in
5 Charleston. I rode the ship with the other captain
6 down from New York down to Baltimore and then, on to
7 Charleston. I got off in Charleston, drove home. Yes,
8 and that was happy. I was only here, maybe, a
9 month-and-a-half, and my wife said, you got to go back.

10 (Laughter)

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You got to go back
12 to sea.

13 RESPONDENT: I mean, you left, but --

14 (Off microphone discussion)

15 RESPONDENT: -- but, she said this isn't
16 going to work, you're going to have to go back, you're
17 not supposed to be here. They're used to a certain
18 life, my family, we're all accustomed to that life and,
19 so she said you do whatever you got to do, kick,
20 scream, grovel, cry, but you got to go back. So I did.

21 I got picked up by, I went to work for,
22 actually, I ended up back on the Maersk Carolina, with
23 Maersk. Same crew, same guys were all still there, and
24 here I come, as Chief Mate, again. Yes. I mean, you
25 laugh, but it's --

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yogi's déjà vu, all
2 over again.

3 RESPONDENT: Here I am, yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: There it is.

5 RESPONDENT: Yes, I was foddered here for a
6 while. And, and then, I guess, I was, I stayed there,
7 I don't know, another three years, or so. And then I
8 wanted to try something else.

9 Ocean Ships called me. Yes, it was Ocean,
10 Ocean Ships called, I guess, and they were, they had
11 the, those pre-positioned ships. I was, well jeeze,
12 man, I never, that would be a nice way just to finish
13 out, maybe I'll try that. And then we talked for quite
14 a while. I was, oh wow, okay. Yes, I'll give it a
15 shot. That sounds interesting.

16 So I was up in, I was going through all the
17 classes, all the courses, then I found out that, I
18 guess, the five-year bid is coming up on the ships and
19 rumors were, they weren't going to get the bid. They
20 were bidding on it, but they didn't think they were
21 going to get it.

22 So now, this is getting to be about -- I
23 even did the, the Cargo Mate for them on the Charlton,
24 because that was the ship I was going to. I did the
25 Cargo Mate for ten days, and I came home.

1 I was back in school. I was back up in
2 (inaudible) and that's when I called them up, what's
3 the confidence level here? I need to know. You're
4 going to, is, are you going to get the Charlton, or is
5 she going to go away? And we talked for quite a while,
6 and they were unconfident that this was going to
7 happen. So I was like, well, all right, I'll finish
8 these courses out, so I did.

9 And I was going out to my phone, out to my
10 car, going to break. I do remember that. And I
11 checked my phone and there was a call from Interocean.
12 And I said, man, wonder what this is all about?

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Who was that that
14 called you from Interocean?

15 RESPONDENT: Melissa Clark. And I said,
16 well, I wonder what that's all about? Well, I didn't
17 have time to call, so I went back to class and -- so I
18 called that night, and they couldn't tell me no
19 particulars, but wanted to know, if I was interested in
20 the Master's job on one of the ships?

21 And I said, well, you know, I told them
22 what, I told them what I was going, what I was doing,
23 where I'm at, what was going on, I was in a (inaudible)
24 and it was decided, okay, just stay where you're at and
25 finish the courses. And I said, okay. So I did.

1 And that's when, I guess, as things
2 progressed, that's when they called me back. Ocean
3 didn't get the ship. That went to Keystone. That went
4 away. And there I was, again, and Interocean had the
5 El Morro, turns out. That's how I ended up over there,
6 on the El Morro.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: What year was that,
8 about?

9 RESPONDENT: Geeze, I don't know.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: That's near
11 history.

12 RESPONDENT: 2013, somewhere -- no,
13 September of 2013, I believe, it was, because I didn't
14 know what I was going to do, so it had to have been
15 September of 2013, somewhere in there.

16 So I went to the El Morro and that's when I
17 arrived with, back with Interocean. It was, they, that
18 call came out of the blue. I didn't seek them out,
19 they, they called me.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So the El Morro,
21 and that was to go on there, as Master?

22 RESPONDENT: Yes.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

24 RESPONDENT: And I did.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And is the El

1 Morro, would you consider that a sister ship of the El
2 Yunque, or the El Faro, or --

3 RESPONDENT: Well --

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- or --

5 RESPONDENT: -- I, I, honestly, don't know
6 the history, to answer that. I, honestly, don't know
7 how, I mean, a lot of people do know the history of,
8 regarding all that, but I, honestly, don't.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

10 RESPONDENT: I don't know the history.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Would the, the El
12 Morro, what was the length of that ship, do you
13 remember?

14 RESPONDENT: Well, man. I think length of
15 her, overall, was still, what, was it around 790, I
16 think it was the same, it was the same length, I
17 believe.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

19 RESPONDENT: I can't, I can't, you know,
20 whole heartedly, I tested that, but it was around that
21 length, I think, --

22 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] --

23 RESPONDENT: -- overall.

24 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Do you
25 remember if it had the mid-body plug, then?

1 RESPONDENT: Sir, I, honestly, can't --

2 MR. Okay.

3 RESPONDENT: -- answer that.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: But it was about
5 790 feet long?

6 RESPONDENT: I believe. I'm guessing. I
7 mean, I don't remember all these numbers. I, honestly,
8 don't remember all these numbers. I, honestly, don't.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Do you remember the
10 holds on the ship?

11 RESPONDENT: Excuse me?

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did it have holds
13 on the ship?

14 RESPONDENT: Cargo holds?

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

16 RESPONDENT: Yes.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Do you remember the
18 --

19 RESPONDENT: I remember that.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- if it was one,
21 two, 2(a), three?

22 RESPONDENT: Oh jeeze. I, honestly, can't,
23 I, honestly, can't remember.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. But do you
25 know if it was a container ship, or --

1 RESPONDENT: Well, she was --

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- well, was it,
3 what kind of ship was it, then?

4 RESPONDENT: She was the, she was a
5 combination, containers on deck and was RORO down
6 below.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And, was the
8 operation on there, similar to the El Faro's operation?

9 RESPONDENT: Yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Cargo operation?

11 RESPONDENT: Yes, I would say so.

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

13 RESPONDENT: Yes.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And where did the
15 ship operate from?

16 RESPONDENT: We were running Jacksonville,
17 San Juan, Fort Lauderdale, and Jacksonville.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And, so that
19 was about the 2013 time frame?

20 RESPONDENT: I want to say it was in 2013,
21 yes.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And how long did
23 you stay on the El Morro?

24 RESPONDENT: I don't, I don't remember when
25 I, exactly, got off. My last trip on there must have

1 been, I would, well, it would have been, February, or
2 April, somewhere in there, of 2014, I believe. I'm,
3 you know, it was around that area, around that time
4 frame.

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was that a similar
6 rotation, about a 70-day rotation, or 75-day rotation
7 that you --

8 RESPONDENT: Yes, 70-day --

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And who was the
10 Master that you relieved on there?

11 (Crosstalk)

12 RESPONDENT: That would have been Captain
13 Mike Davidson.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. So that was,
15 was that the first time that you met Davidson, was on
16 the El Morro?

17 RESPONDENT: Yes.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you ride with
19 the ship, for any length of time?

20 RESPONDENT: Yes, one week. I did a round
21 trip, I think, with Captain Mike. Yes, I did, I did a
22 round trip.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was the bridge,
24 basically, the same layout on there that it was on the
25 El Faro?

1 RESPONDENT: Well, no, she was, she was a
2 little different. She was a little different, it was,
3 basically, the same, but the -- the only thing that, I
4 think, was changed was the VHF radios were different.
5 They were at different positions than what the El, the
6 El Morro was. But --

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: But the overall
8 footprint of the, of the wheelhouse --

9 RESPONDENT: Yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- where the wheel
11 is --

12 RESPONDENT: Yes.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- and the radars
14 --

15 RESPONDENT: Yes.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- and the
17 collision avoidance?

18 RESPONDENT: Yes. That was the same.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The chart room was
20 in back of the --

21 RESPONDENT: Correct. Yes.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And had satellite
23 communications --

24 RESPONDENT: Yes.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- had GMDSS

1 equipment? Were you, also, the radio operator on
2 there?

3 RESPONDENT: No. The Second Mate was the
4 designated GMDSS.

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. How did that
6 ship communicate back and forth with the company --

7 RESPONDENT: The El Morro?

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: -- when you were at
9 sea?

10 RESPONDENT: I don't, honestly, recall the,
11 the satellite system we used, at the time. That, that
12 changed, later on, and I don't recall the, the
13 communication they used, at the time. The --

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you send emails
15 back and forth?

16 RESPONDENT: Yes.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was it telexes, or
18 --

19 RESPONDENT: We sent emails, I just don't
20 remember the service they used, at the time. And that
21 all went through, I had to go to another, another
22 office, in order to blast out, I had to go across the
23 hall on that ship, as I recall.

24 I had to go into another hall. I could, it
25 would work automatically, at certain hours, it would,

1 because it did transfers with the AMOS and different
2 programs on the ship, payroll, so I had to go to --
3 that computer was set up in another room, I believe,
4 and that's where you, you blasted out.

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Another room on the
6 Bridge level?

7 RESPONDENT: No. It was, I think, if I
8 recall, it was a, I don't, honestly, recall where it
9 was on, on the El Morro. I don't, honestly, recall.
10 But, maybe that was the El Faro. No, I don't --

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did they --

12 RESPONDENT: -- I don't, honestly, recall
13 the room, but (inaudible) but I had it, to blast. Yes.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The office on the
15 El Morro, or the room next to the Captain's, Captain's
16 office, on the El Morro, was that used for anything?

17 RESPONDENT: Wait a minute, on the El Morro,
18 the room, the room adjacent to me?

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Adjacent to the
20 Captain's office.

21 RESPONDENT: Yes. On the El Morro, yes. I
22 believe that was the, I want to say, the Third Mate's
23 room. It was right next to me.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did the old radio
25 room that they had on those ships, was that used at

1 all?

2 RESPONDENT: I, honestly, don't know where
3 the old radio room was on those ships.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: All right. So back
5 to the El Morro Bridge, you sent out emails. That was
6 your primary mode of communication back and forth with
7 the company, at sea?

8 RESPONDENT: On the El Morro, if you,
9 please, rephrase that, again?

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The primary means
11 of communication back and forth with the company when
12 you were at sea, was that, basically, through the email
13 system?

14 RESPONDENT: Yes. As I recall, yes.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you, typically,
16 send out departure messages and new reports through the
17 email system?

18 RESPONDENT: Yes.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So on the El Morro,
20 you were on there for about, well, you went on in
21 September, and then, you left that, sometime in the, in
22 early 2014 time frame?

23 RESPONDENT: Yes.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And then, after the
25 El Morro, what did you do after El Morro?

1 RESPONDENT: That's where we, we took the El
2 Faro out.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

4 RESPONDENT: That was the El Faro. And I
5 want to say that was sometime in May, sometime. I, I
6 don't know exact date and time, or whatever, but I
7 believe it was sometime in May. I'm not, I'm not,
8 quite sure.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Back to the El
10 Faro, again, I hate to jump back, but were there any
11 propulsion problems, or problems with the plant on
12 there? I say, the plant, the boilers, or anything that
13 you can remember that they had?

14 RESPONDENT: Problems?

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes. Yes.

16 RESPONDENT: No. No I do not.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: When you were on
18 the El Morro, did she ever lose the plant, or ever lose
19 propulsion?

20 RESPONDENT: On the El Morro?

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: On the El Morro,
22 yes.

23 RESPONDENT: No.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So how about any
25 leaks that you heard about, anything in the, in any of

1 the holds, or Number 3 Hold?

2 RESPONDENT: Which ship?

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The El Morro,
4 solely on the El Morro?

5 RESPONDENT: No. I don't recall. I don't
6 recall anything.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Do you recall if
8 there were -- and let me back up. The El Morro, was
9 that, was that managed by Interocean, at the time?

10 RESPONDENT: It was.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was that owned by
12 Sea Star Lines?

13 RESPONDENT: Yes.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. And, were
15 the operational procedures on there, overall, the
16 overall operational procedures, were they similar to
17 what, the El Faro?

18 RESPONDENT: Yes.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: It was the same
20 safety management system, the same --

21 RESPONDENT: Yes.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

23 RESPONDENT: Yes. And --

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I'm not asking you
25 to recollect exactly, who can recollect exactly certain

1 things, but it's just, gives us an idea it was the same
2 basic ship and the same basic operation. And that was
3 also a RoLo operation load on the main deck and roll-on
4 down below?

5 (No Response)

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The El Morro was,
7 basically, the same as El Yunque, the containers on the
8 main deck and drive on/drive off down below, second
9 deck on down?

10 RESPONDENT: I was never on the El Yunque.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The El Morro. The
12 El Morro.

13 RESPONDENT: The El Morro?

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

15 RESPONDENT: Yes, she was containers on deck
16 and RORO down below.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. Okay.

18 Questions?

19 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

20 (Off microphone discussion)

21 MR. [REDACTED] I guess, as far as the El
22 Morro --

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

24 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from
25 the Coast Guard. Sorry, I need to announce myself.

1 But the El Morro, as far as your experience on the El
2 Morro, did you, did you have any problems with a, a
3 list, or any, a permanent list on the vessel, at any
4 time?

5 RESPONDENT: No, sir. Not that I can
6 recall, no.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

8 RESPONDENT: Not that I can recollect.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall, on the El
10 Morro, any problems with stability, at all?

11 RESPONDENT: No, sir.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

13 RESPONDENT: No.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Was the loading computer,
15 generally, accurate on the El Morro?

16 RESPONDENT: The, the Chief Mate did all the
17 stability on there. He did all the stability. But, to
18 the best of my knowledge, yes, it was, it was accurate.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, besides roll
20 on/roll off cargo and containers, did you carry any
21 other additional cargos, like a fructose, or ROM, or
22 any other additional tankage?

23 RESPONDENT: On the?

24 MR. [REDACTED] On the El Morro, just
25 sticking with the El Morro.

1 RESPONDENT: Yes. Yes, they had fructose on
2 there.

3 MR. [REDACTED] They did carry fructose?

4 RESPONDENT: Yes they did.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

6 RESPONDENT: But, yes. Yes, sir.

7 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And with the
8 carriage of fructose, do you remember, about, how many
9 tanks?

10 RESPONDENT: No, sir. I do not recall the
11 exact number of tanks.

12 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. Were they in the
13 Holds 1 and 2, up forward, down on the tank ops?

14 RESPONDENT: I, honestly, don't recall. I
15 believe so.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, on the carriage
17 of fructose, I know you said the Chief Mate did the
18 loading and the load computer, but do you recall, if
19 you had the capability of loading the fructose tanks in
20 the, in the load computer?

21 RESPONDENT: Oh gee. I, honestly, can't
22 answer that.

23 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

24 RESPONDENT: I do -- yes, I believe, yes, I
25 believe so. It had to be.

1 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

2 RESPONDENT: I would, I would --

3 MR. [REDACTED] And --

4 RESPONDENT: I didn't work the stability on
5 the El Morro, the Chief Mate did, was, supervised all
6 the loading and unloading and calculated the stability.
7 They were, they were there long before me. Yes.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And just a couple
9 more questions on the El Morro, I'm just sticking with
10 that right now.

11 RESPONDENT: Yes.

12 MR. [REDACTED] With the El Morro, did you
13 have any sea spray that would, typically, go up on the
14 second deck, or anything like that? Did you get, did
15 you get any wash going across the second deck,
16 typically, on any transits?

17 RESPONDENT: No, sir. I do not recall ever
18 having a wash on the, on 2 Deck, no. I've seen spray
19 --

20 MR. [REDACTED] Spray.

21 RESPONDENT: -- sea spray. But never do I,
22 do I recall seeing water sloshed across the deck, no.

23 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And structural
24 issues, at all, on that vessel, the El Morro?

25 RESPONDENT: Well, I think there, I think

1 that was all in the, that was all in the ABS report, I
2 do recall. There were the, that, that's all my
3 knowledge of it.

4 MR. [REDACTED] On the El Morro?

5 RESPONDENT: On the El Morro. Because we
6 went down --

7 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

8 RESPONDENT: Yes.

9 MR. [REDACTED] What do you --

10 RESPONDENT: On El Morro.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Do you recall --

12 RESPONDENT: I don't, I don't recall
13 everything, but I do recall Coast Guard was down --

14 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

15 RESPONDENT: -- too, for a -- I do remember
16 that, for a surprise ACP.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

18 RESPONDENT: And they combed through
19 everything. There were two Coast Guard inspectors.
20 One was a Lieutenant, I remember that, and one was an
21 older fellow. And only reason I remember that, he was
22 here in Cape May Station and we knew a lot of the same
23 people, or he knew Commander Bart and Commander Bart
24 was good friends with my family, my father. He was the
25 Commander, or somewhere like, in charge of the Cape

1 May, Cape May train station. Because he saw Bob was
2 from Cape May and that's how that came up. It was an
3 older fellow.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

5 RESPONDENT: And they combed through the
6 ship that day. They spent all day there, all day. And
7 went through all my certificates. And everything was
8 as it should be.

9 MR. [REDACTED] So you didn't -- let me
10 rephrase the question. [REDACTED] again. As far
11 as, was there detected, at any point, any fracturing,
12 buckling, any structural --

13 RESPONDENT: Not that --

14 MR. [REDACTED] -- failures of the, of the
15 hull, structural members?

16 RESPONDENT: Not that I'm aware of.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

18 RESPONDENT: Not that I'm aware of.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And, [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED] one last question. Just, on the El Morro,
21 do you recall any problems with the lashing of, of the
22 cargo, any loose cargo?

23 RESPONDENT: On the El Morro?

24 MR. [REDACTED] Yes.

25 RESPONDENT: No, sir. In fact, well, you

1 know, I was, I was big on lashing. Yes, that was on
2 the car carriers, and so I did discuss that with the
3 Chief Mate, both of them. And no, I don't recall,
4 ever, we were tightening, we were tightening lashings.

5 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

6 RESPONDENT: Making our runs through, it was
7 a, it was pretty standard.

8 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

9 RESPONDENT: Standard.

10 MR. [REDACTED] That's all I have, for now.

11 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Okay. Carrie Bell,
12 NTSB. I've just got a few questions. You mentioned,
13 when you first were called by TOTE, Melissa Clark
14 called you, kind of, out of the blue, was that, is that
15 typical for another, for a company just to call and
16 offer you a job, or --

17 RESPONDENT: I wouldn't say that was typical
18 for me.

19 (Laughter)

20 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Okay. Do you know if
21 someone referred you, or what made, do you have any
22 idea why they would have just called you out of the
23 blue?

24 RESPONDENT: I don't know. I don't know. I
25 didn't ask.

1 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Yes. So when you went
2 down, did you have to do an interview?

3 RESPONDENT: I had to submit a resume, which
4 I did. They asked me to submit a resume, so I did.
5 And who read that, I do not know. I sent it to Melissa
6 Clark and it went from there, whoever, whoever was to
7 review it.

8 INVESTIGATOR BELL: So what was that process
9 like, from, from the time they called you, until you
10 started working, time frame, what --

11 RESPONDENT: Oh jeeze, I don't, I'm not, I'm
12 not sure of the time frame, but they came back to me
13 just to stay up there and continue taking those courses
14 and they were going to use somebody else. And I said,
15 well, okay. So I did. And they, that's when I, they
16 said, within September, would you be available to
17 relieve Captain Mike Davidson? And I said yes. That's
18 how that came to be.

19 INVESTIGATOR BELL: So when you got there,
20 was there any kind of orientation to the company, or
21 what was, sort of, the process, from the time you got
22 hired, until you were permanent Captain?

23 RESPONDENT: I was never permanent.

24 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Oh, okay.

25 RESPONDENT: I was never hired, as a

1 permanent.

2 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Oh okay.

3 RESPONDENT: They told me, this is strictly
4 temporary --

5 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Okay.

6 RESPONDENT: -- would you be able to fill
7 in? You're not here permanent, this is only going to
8 be temporary, because, I guess, they had other things
9 going on, at the time, and I said, well, okay. I was
10 between trips.

11 I could have gone back to the Maersk
12 Carolina. I had, there were other things going on in
13 my life back then, I had to get custody of my child.
14 He was turning 18 and I came home.

15 I was, we were dealing with that, because he
16 has a disability and we had to go through the process,
17 so I had to be available for that, so we did. In the
18 interim, I had to take a leave of absence from Maersk.
19 And I had to do that, and I did.

20 And then, I couldn't get back into the
21 rotation. This came up, and I let Maersk know that
22 this was temporary, I need to, you know, I had a chance
23 to fill in, because I needed, I needed the Union
24 benefits, as well, insurance. That's everything today.

25 So I made the trip, understanding that I was

1 only going to be temporary. In the interim, I didn't
2 get off in time, so I ended up making another trip,
3 because I missed my ship in New York. So I was, I was
4 never offered, actually, a permanent job, I was always
5 temporary.

6 INVESTIGATOR BELL: The entire time you
7 worked for TOTE?

8 RESPONDENT: At the time, yes. That's the
9 way I was, that was the way I was hired, it was, it was
10 temporary. It was never a permanent position.

11 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Okay.

12 RESPONDENT: From the outset.

13 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Yes.

14 RESPONDENT: It was strictly going to be
15 temporary.

16 INVESTIGATOR BELL: So your first trip, you
17 said you did a round trip with Captain Davidson, as
18 your first, kind of, would you call that a
19 familiarization?

20 RESPONDENT: I suppose that was. They, they
21 asked me to make a, one round trip with Captain Mike
22 Davidson and I said, well okay.

23 INVESTIGATOR BELL: And then, after that,
24 you did a trip on your own --

25 RESPONDENT: Yes.

1 INVESTIGATOR BELL: -- immediately following
2 that same --

3 RESPONDENT: Yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR BELL: Okay.

5 RESPONDENT: Yes.

6 INVESTIGATOR BELL: That's all I have, right
7 now.

8 RESPONDENT: All right. Can I take a little
9 break, or --

10 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, sure. Anytime you
11 want to.

12 RESPONDENT: Or, take a smoke?

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You smoke? I'll
14 smoke with --

15 RESPONDENT: I got a pipe.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: What is -- what?

17 RESPONDENT: My pipe.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I know. Okay,
19 well, the time is 11:39 a.m., stop the tape.

20 (Whereupon, the foregoing matter went off
21 the record at 11:39 a.m. and went back on the record at
22 12:10 p.m.)

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: The time is now about 12:10,
24 back still on the 3rd. And we're continuing with Eric
25 Axelsson's interview.

1 Eric, we'd like to now move on to the El
2 Faro. And the bank of questions I'd like to ask now
3 are relating to the El Faro.

4 Can you tell us what the ship's normal route
5 was that you operated on?

6 MR. AXELSSON: Normally, we would just
7 leave, sail from Jacksonville and go to San Juan; to
8 San Juan, back to Jacksonville.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: When did you start on that
10 route about on the El Faro? When did you start with
11 them?

12 MR. AXELSSON: I want to say some time late
13 May of 2014, some time around May.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: And was it Captain Davidson
15 that was on the El Faro when you went on board to
16 relieve?

17 MR. AXELSSON: No. I was on the El Faro. I
18 took the El Faro out of North Florida Shipyard. She
19 was up there.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: So she was --

21 MR. AXELSSON: The El Maro went away. And
22 then that took -- then they brought the El Faro out.
23 So I went to the El Faro. Captain Mike stayed on the
24 El Maro.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: So you broke out the El Faro

1 from lay up?

2 MR. AXELSSON: From the North Florida
3 Shipyard.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: And when she was in North
5 Florida Shipyard, was she just laid up there or did
6 they do any work on her?

7 MR. AXELSSON: To my knowledge, I think they
8 did do some work. Exactly what, I don't know.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you come on right at the
10 end?

11 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. I mean at the end, yes.
12 I came on at the end. And I remember we shifted down
13 to Jacksonville, the Blunt Island. And that's where I
14 think they put the -- near as I can recollect, that's
15 where they put the fructose tanks on. There were six
16 of them, I believe. Six runs in my mind. Six brand
17 new tanks, I believe they were.

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did they do it at Blunt
19 Island?

20 MR. AXELSSON: As near as I can recollect,
21 it was at Blunt Island, yes.

22 LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from the
23 Coast Guard. So you're saying you took it out of North
24 Florida Shipyard, but Blunt Island is where the
25 fructose things were at?

1 MR. AXELSSON: I'm guessing. As near as I
2 can recollect that's where.

3 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

4 MR. AXELSSON: I'm not positive. I'm not
5 positive on that, where the exact location they did
6 that. No, no. I think it was North Florida Shipyard.
7 They were there. Maybe they did. I can't honestly
8 answer that. But I know there were six new tanks.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: So you went on some time in
10 May and then you ended up bringing it down to Blunt
11 Island.

12 MR. AXELSSON: Correct.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: And then --

14 MR. AXELSSON: -- and that's where we took
15 the load was at Blunt Island. That was in May. I
16 think I'm pretty sure about that.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: And the first load, the
18 fructose tanks were on board there?

19 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. To my knowledge, they
20 were.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: I'd like to take out a chart
22 that I have of the Caribbean area.

23 MS. BELL: While you're doing that, I have a
24 quick question. Carrie Bell. Just to clarify, you
25 said that when you came to El Maro, you replaced

1 Captain Davidson on El Maro. And then when you went to
2 El Faro, where was he? Was he leaving El Faro or was
3 he still working on that ship?

4 MR. AXELSSON: Who?

5 MS. BELL: Captain Davidson.

6 MR. AXELSSON: When I went to the El Faro,
7 Captain Mike Davidson was on the El Maro and that's
8 where he took it -- where she went over to Texas where
9 she was scrapped.

10 MS. BELL: Okay.

11 MR. AXELSSON: I was on the El Faro. I just
12 brought the El Faro down. She left -- I think she
13 sailed and then we shifted down.

14 MS. BELL: Okay. Thank you.

15 MR. AXELSSON: Runs in my mind that's how
16 that works. Yes. She shifted from the berth, sailed
17 from the berth and then we shifted down.

18 MS. BELL: Okay.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: And this is Mike Kucharski
20 again. I have laid out on the table here Chart 124 of
21 the North Atlantic Ocean. It's an old DMA chart and it
22 runs from basically Cape Hatteras down to the north
23 coast of South America. On it it has the Jacksonville
24 area and all the Caribbean islands including Puerto
25 Rico.

1 Captain, your normal route on here was from
2 Jacksonville, I'm pointing to Jacksonville, straight
3 down to Puerto Rico, down to San Juan?

4 MR. AXELSSON: Correct.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. Do you recollect if
6 there were any weather routes that were used instead of
7 the straight shot going down to Puerto Rico?

8 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. I am aware.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was that like in any kind of
10 a preprinted sheet that they had up on the bridge, the
11 different routes?

12 MR. AXELSSON: We did have -- those routes
13 are already laid out. It was on a sail plan.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: On a sail plan?

15 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. Way points and how we
16 would run for bad weather. We already had those made
17 up.

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Were those routes sent in to
19 the company at any time?

20 MR. AXELSSON: I can't answer that. I don't
21 know if they were or not.

22 MR. KUCHARSKI: What basically -- those
23 weather routes, what drove those routes or why were
24 those routes chosen to use routes instead of the
25 straight shot from Jacksonville down to San Juan?

1 MR. AXELSSON: Deviation, in case you wanted
2 to deviate for bad weather, we had some outlets.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: And looking at this, instead
4 of the straight shot down to -- from Jacksonville down
5 to San Juan, from your recollection, what are some of
6 the possible routes that could be taken?

7 MR. AXELSSON: Well, one from Jacksonville
8 and you can come down straight to Florida and cut
9 through Northwest Providence. It would all depend on
10 what the weather was doing, where it was, location,
11 what it was going to do. But one of them was to come
12 through Northwest Providence.

13 I mean if the storm was heading off to the
14 north and northeast, and you wanted to duck below, you
15 come down straight to Florida and you come through
16 Northwest Providence and duck underneath, then come out
17 Hole in the Wall, and then continue to track south.
18 That was one.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: Where do you see Hole in the
20 Wall on here?

21 MR. AXELSSON: Right here. Come down
22 through the Straits of Florida, you cut right through
23 here through Grand Bahama. We're at Freeport. It's on
24 there, right? You got a pretty large scale -- so you
25 cut through Northwest Providence channel, pop out

1 northeast chain Hole in the Wall and come through this
2 way. Then you can get below on the other side of it
3 and continue on.

4 One of them was Jacksonville, down through
5 Straits of Florida. Then you cut through the Old
6 Bahama Channel, you know, come out and go to Puerto
7 Rico. That was a possibility, depending on what was
8 going on. You had the Straits of Florida and I
9 wouldn't be adverse to using Yucatan if I had to,
10 depending on what was going on and then you had your
11 speed.

12 But we pretty much had this chart laid out
13 as a possibility, coming down the Straights of Florida
14 through Old Bahama Channel alongside of Cuba and coming
15 out through.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay, so it's hard to
17 understand on the tape what you just pointed to, but
18 it's coming out of Jacksonville, heading down to the
19 Strait of Florida or actually somewhere off of Jupiter
20 Inlet and going down Northwest Channel, Northwest
21 Providence Channel and then out.

22 Another route was to come down the Strait of
23 Florida and then go into the Old Bahama Channel?

24 MR. AXELSSON: Correct.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: And run along the north

1 coast of Cuba and Hispaniola?

2 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: And then another possible
4 route was coming down Jacksonville along the coast of
5 Florida through the Strait of Florida, around the
6 western tip of Cuba at Cabo --

7 MR. AXELSSON: We didn't have this way
8 point, this plan laid out. It was just -- it came up
9 in conversation. When we were on the ship it was a
10 thought. It never -- I never had to do that.

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: Never had to go to Yucatan?

12 MR. AXELSSON: No.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: But how about the other --
14 using the old Bahama Channel and the New Providence
15 Channel. Did you have to use those at all while you
16 were out there?

17 MR. AXELSSON: I used Northwest Providence
18 and coming out Northeast Providence. I only had to do
19 it once the whole time.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: How about the Old Bahama
21 Channel?

22 MR. AXELSSON: I never used Old Bahama. I
23 never had a need to.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: This has come up a couple of
25 times or more than once. Would you -- if the hurricane

1 were approaching, would you consider staying in port as
2 opposed to going out at sea?

3 MR. AXELSSON: I would not be -- I've never
4 been put in that position where I had to make a
5 decision like that. And I really don't care to
6 speculate on that. But I've never been put in that
7 kind of situation where I had to consider that.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. If you used these
9 alternate routes, did that -- was that extra time that
10 you had to run and cause a possible delay in getting
11 down to San Juan?

12 MR. AXELSSON: It could be. Yes.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: If you arrived late in San
14 Juan, what would happen if you arrived late?

15 MR. AXELSSON: I don't understand.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did they have set cargo
17 starts in San Juan?

18 MR. AXELSSON: They did.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: What time were they, do you
20 remember?

21 MR. AXELSSON: They were -- when I left,
22 they were arriving 5 in the morning and departing that
23 night around 2200.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was the cargo start set up
25 for 5 o'clock start?

1 MR. AXELSSON: It was set up.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: So if you got in late, did
3 you ever get in late on that run?

4 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: And what would happen if you
6 got in late on that run?

7 MR. AXELSSON: Nothing. I advised them as
8 to what my ETA was going to be the day before. If I
9 was running late, they said fine, we'll set it up --
10 they changed the time. They had a window there where
11 they could adjust the start times and they did.

12 MR. KUCHARSKI: And you say you advised.
13 Who did you send that -- who did that message go to?

14 MR. AXELSSON: That went to San Juan, so
15 those parties down there. There was a group message
16 out there. I sent it to Don Matthews, Tim Neeson, Ron
17 Rodriguez would have gotten on that message as far as I
18 know, and Jim Fisker-Andersen. I let him know what I
19 was doing, if I was going to be late. It was a
20 separate ETA message.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: And Tim Neeson was the port
22 engineer?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Correct.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: How about to John Lawrence,
25 did you communicate at all, ETAs to John Lawrence?

1 MR. AXELSSON: No, I did not. There was a
2 separate, the ETA now was southbound. That was just to
3 notify San Juan that you're either on time or you're
4 going to be late. And we did that on a weekly basis.
5 And they needed to know just before a certain time so
6 they can adjust start times. And to my knowledge or my
7 experience with them, it was never an issue, just let
8 them know, my experience with them.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you know if anybody else
10 had any other experiences?

11 MR. AXELSSON: That I'm not aware of.

12 MR. KUCHARSKI: A little bit different, but
13 I'd like to stay along the navigation-type questions.
14 Did you maneuver the ship or were you captain on the
15 ship when you were in large seas, say over 20-foot
16 seas?

17 MR. AXELSSON: I never experienced seas of
18 that nature when I was on that run.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay.

20 MR. AXELSSON: I personally haven't.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: What would you say the
22 maximum roll was on that ship while you were on board?

23 MR. AXELSSON: I want to say probably about
24 15 degrees one time. Only once, and that was -- it was
25 on a flat, calm day going through Northeast Providence

1 Channel, that particular day. And it was just a long,
2 rolling swell. And we just had to change course like
3 five degrees and we were done, it stopped. It wasn't a
4 breath of wind, no seas. It was just a long swell. I
5 think one time I had to go to Lauderdale one time and
6 that was the only occasion. That one time.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was that northbound or
8 southbound?

9 MR. AXELSSON: That was northbound. And we
10 were heading -- they wanted us to go into Lauderdale
11 once. I had to take us through there. And that was
12 just that one occasion and by the time I got up there
13 wasn't a breath of wind, no seas. It was just a long
14 swell, and we changed five degrees and that stopped
15 everything.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you notice a difference
17 in the way the ship felt when she was northbound or
18 southbound?

19 MR. AXELSSON: Not so much, no. Not so
20 much.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: What was the highest wind
22 speed while underway?

23 MR. AXELSSON: True?

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes, true wind speed.

25 MR. AXELSSON: Maybe 25 knots.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: So from May of 2014 through
2 August of 2015, about 25 knots was the maximum wind
3 speed that you encountered underway?

4 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, unless -- well, unless
5 -- what do they call it -- a squall might come through.
6 It might increase a little bit, but for the most part,
7 that was about it. That was about it. Twenty-five
8 knots. Usually, for that run, the prevailing was
9 usually 15 to 20 southeast, 15 to 20 knots.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you and Captain Davidson
11 ever discuss weather or the way the ship handled?

12 MR. AXELSSON: Occasionally, yes, but -- and
13 we pretty much experienced the same thing at turnover.
14 We always told each other what the weather was coming
15 up if there was anything significant. We always had
16 the program open.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: The program being the Bon
18 Voyage?

19 MR. AXELSSON: The Bon Voyage system, yes.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: How would you compare the El
21 Faro's handling to other ships that you served on as
22 master?

23 MR. AXELSSON: I honestly thought she
24 handled pretty well, the El Faro.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: Any differences with

1 different seas or different winds as far as handling
2 the ship?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Let me think now. I can't
4 say I ever had the El Faro in any kind of significant
5 seas. It was just that one time, that long swell and
6 it was only once that I experienced that. And that
7 only took a couple of minutes. But as far as the
8 handling in the wind and stuff, it wasn't any different
9 than any other ship. You have a lot of sail area
10 there, but I can't say I had a problem.

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was it fairly typical to
12 have on the loaded condition to have three high as far
13 as the containers went?

14 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, three high. But it
15 wasn't every hatch either. Some were only two high.
16 Some were only two high, three high.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you remember if there was
18 a speed where she -- basically, she wouldn't steer
19 well?

20 MR. AXELSSON: When you got down to -- I'm
21 going to say around four knots, four and a half runs in
22 my mind. Yes, we got down to about -- yes, probably
23 four, around four knots. And you know, a quick kick
24 ahead would straighten it out. It was when you were
25 maneuvering basically. I want to say around four,

1 three, you know. It was around there. And you use the
2 engine.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: Jumping back a little bit to
4 what you mentioned earlier on, you said you were on the
5 Brooks Range as third mate or second mate?

6 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was that ship running in the
8 Gulf of Alaska at that time?

9 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. Going to Valdez.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Valdez.

11 MR. AXELSSON: Valdez run. Yes, were on the
12 Valdez run. El Segundo, Richmond, and then up to
13 Valdez.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: I mentioned that the
15 handling while you were master, about comparing to
16 other ships that you were master on. How about
17 comparing it to any ships that you were a mate on,
18 similar size, type, so you were on container ships and
19 ROLO ships?

20 MR. AXELSSON: Right.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: Would you say she, the El
22 Faro, handled similar to those ships?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. I thought she handled
24 well. I didn't find anything that jumps out at me. I
25 can't think of anything.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: How about the navigation
2 equipment on the bridge? Did you find it reliable?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: No problems with any of it?

5 MR. AXELSSON: Not that I can recall.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: How about the GMDSS
7 equipment? Did you find that reliable?

8 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. As a matter of fact, I
9 think she just went through an inspection, the annual.
10 But yes.

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you recollect any of the
12 means of sending a distress message on that ship?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Could you tell us what they
15 would be?

16 MR. AXELSSON: To send a quick one?

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes.

18 MR. AXELSSON: You would hit the -- there's
19 a button you could push. You'd hit the distress button
20 and you flip the switch. You hit send. And you hold
21 it for five seconds and it would go out. We had crib
22 sheets up there and every week, practiced how to send a
23 designated one on the SATSEA (phonetic). Or press the
24 button and it would be very quick.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: You said SATSEA?

1 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. That was on the SATSEA.
2 We had a -- where you can just push the button and it
3 would go out automatically, undesignated. I do recall
4 that, yes.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: So that was a fast mode to
6 go ahead and do -- you lift some kind of a cover on it,
7 press a button?

8 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, on a SATSEA, there was.
9 You could. It was a quick vote (phonetic). You hit
10 the -- you had to open the -- it said distress, red.
11 You hit it, hold it, and you hit the send button and it
12 would all go out as undesignated.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: What other modes of sending
14 out a distress signal do you recollect?

15 MR. AXELSSON: You could hit the SSAS. That
16 was a button on the bridge that would send out a
17 message that we were having a problem. It was all done
18 through the satellite.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: SSAS being the Ship Security
20 Alert System?

21 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. I had one in my office
22 as well.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: And how about any other
24 modes?

25 MR. AXELSSON: Well, let me think here. We

1 also had EPIRB. We had the narrow band direct
2 printing. We had the signal side band. We had the
3 SATSEA, SSAS, and the VHF radio, anything local, if you
4 want to send out a May Day, wanted to signal sideband
5 or the VHF.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was a radio log kept on
7 board the ship?

8 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. Yes, it was.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: Were the older copies of the
10 radio log, were those kept on board the ship also or
11 were they sent in?

12 MR. AXELSSON: I believe they were archived
13 on board.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. [REDACTED]

15 LCDR [REDACTED] Lieutenant Commander
16 [REDACTED] What weather information was specifically
17 available to the officers and crew and how often was it
18 checked underway?

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: I'd like to hold off on that
20 question. I have a bunch of weather questions that I'd
21 like to ask.

22 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay, sorry.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: That's okay.

24 LCDR [REDACTED] What would you like to
25 stick to?

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: Just finish up on the
2 navigation equipment. Then we have weather questions.

3 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. No questions from
4 me now.

5 MS. BELL: I have a couple of questions.
6 Carrie Bell, NTSB. So you talked a little bit about
7 how you discussed the routes with other captains when
8 there was weather. If you were going northbound and
9 they were coming southbound, you might discuss a route
10 you would take that might be different from your
11 regular route. You would have those conversations if
12 you were thinking about going a different way.

13 MR. AXELSSON: You mean with the other ship,
14 the sister ship?

15 MS. BELL: Yes.

16 MR. AXELSSON: I would, but what runs in my
17 mind, I didn't have occasion to have to do that, but I
18 would not rule it out. She would be down south and I
19 would be up north.

20 MS. BELL: Even if you might not have done
21 this on a regular basis, if you change your route,
22 would you have to inform the company? What other
23 requirements for letting them know if you're going to
24 go a different way or --

25 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. One occasion that I

1 did, I notified the company before I sailed, before I
2 left the dock. This is where I'm going. This is how
3 I'm doing it. This is -- you know. And I followed up
4 with an email and a telephone conversation that hey,
5 this is the direction I'm going. And their response
6 was do what you got to do. Take care of the ship. Let
7 us know if you're going to be late. Update us on the
8 (inaudible). And I did.

9 Next morning, I told them I was cutting
10 through East Providence Channel. We're on schedule.
11 And I was below it all.

12 MS. BELL: And so would you ever have them
13 -- would there be any reason for them to ever call you?
14 Would they ever check in on the ship if the weather was
15 bad or if they thought -- in that case, when you are
16 going to go a different way, would they call just to
17 check and see how things were progressing?

18 MR. AXELSSON: We emailed and conversed the
19 next morning.

20 MS. BELL: You initiated those phone calls?

21 MR. AXELSSON: I did. It was an email.

22 MS. BELL: But did they ever call you at
23 all? Would that be something --

24 MR. AXELSSON: Maybe I called them first and
25 I followed up with an email. I might have had an email

1 later in the day if my ETA was still good? And I said
2 yes. And the weather, I gave them an update on the
3 weather. And I was cutting through -- coming through
4 Northeast Providence at the time.

5 MS. BELL: Okay. Do you know if there has
6 ever been a time when the company overrode what the
7 captain decided to do in those situations where there
8 was weather or they decided to -- you know, maybe there
9 was maintenance, something that might hold the ship
10 back from getting to their destination on time?

11 MR. AXELSSON: What are you asking?

12 MS. BELL: At any time would the company
13 override a captain's decision?

14 MR. AXELSSON: I didn't experience anything
15 like that and it never came up.

16 MS. BELL: And you don't know of anyone else
17 who might have --

18 MR. AXELSSON: No, I do not.

19 MS. BELL: Thank you. Was there any kind of
20 hurricane preparedness policy in place during the
21 hurricane season?

22 MR. AXELSSON: They did. They had a -- what
23 did they call it -- a heavy weather policy. I can't
24 recite it.

25 MS. BELL: Is there anything that stands out

1 about that policy that's different from the rest of the
2 year?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. We carried extra fuel
4 during hurricane season. I think it was -- if I'm not
5 mistaken, it was for an extra three days steam
6 (phonetic).

7 MS. BELL: That's all I have right now.

8 MR. AXELSSON: And there was extra fuel. I
9 do recall that. We always had that for an extra three
10 days.

11 MS. BELL: For three days.

12 MR. AXELSSON: I'm almost positive it was
13 three days. I don't remember if it was three or four,
14 but I thought it was three.

15 MS. BELL: Okay. Thank you.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Mike Kucharski. Back to the
17 navigation equipment. Is there a pre-departure
18 checklist that was used for the navigation equipment?

19 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was that ever sent to the
21 office?

22 MR. AXELSSON: No, they were retained on
23 board. As far as I -- to my knowledge, yes. They were
24 retained on board. I think we had to retain them like
25 two years. I don't remember if they were two years or

1 six months. Some were six months. Some were two
2 years. MR. KUCHARSKI: But you didn't send
3 them into the company?

4 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. We had to archive
5 them for audit to the best of my knowledge. That's
6 what we did, yes.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Mike or Carrie? I've
8 finished with the pure navigation-type questions.
9 Anything on that topic area?

10 Captain, anything you want to add on the
11 navigation equipment?

12 MR. AXELSSON: No, because there's really
13 nothing honestly that stands out or jumps out to me
14 that there was an issue with anything to be honest with
15 you. No. Everything was working. When I left there,
16 everything was working.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: Moving on to cargo, you said
18 5 o'clock, 0500 cargo start was fairly typical in San
19 Juan?

20 MR. AXELSSON: Well, that was -- let me go
21 back. I think it was during the whale season and
22 daylight savings time, they had a 07 o'clock start
23 because of the whale season. And then once the whale
24 season ended or shortly thereafter, is when they went
25 back to the 0500 because of the whale zone.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: You had enough excess speed
2 to arrive two hours later then and stay on schedule?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Rephrase that now?

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: You had enough excess speed
5 to get there at 5 o'clock as opposed to 7 o'clock
6 without any problem and stay on schedule?

7 MR. AXELSSON: You had to speed, but I
8 didn't operate that way. My instructions were let's
9 bring it up to the speed where everything is --
10 everybody is comfortable and everything is operating
11 smooth. Do not push it. I didn't work that way. I
12 did not work that way. By golly, I wanted -- my
13 instructions to the chief were you bring it up to the
14 RPM where she's happy, everybody is comfortable. We
15 didn't -- I didn't push it. It is what it is. If you
16 got out late, you're out late. If we had to stop for
17 the whale zone, we stopped for the whale zone. I will
18 notify them of an ETA. And if we're late, we're late.
19 That's it. I can show her that. And I did. And there
20 was never an issue. I never had a problem. Nobody
21 ever came back to me and scrutinized me or said
22 anything.

23 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was there a lashing policy
24 for the cargo?

25 MR. AXELSSON: She had an approved cargo

1 load securing manual, yes. It was ABS approved.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: Were there any problems with
3 the lashings? I think you mentioned that you had to
4 check through lashings, tighten things up?

5 MR. AXELSSON: They -- yes, as -- they were
6 always around the deck, absolutely, to check lashings.
7 That was the chief mate that did that.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: The chief mate reported to
9 you, so did he report any problems with the --

10 MR. AXELSSON: I always asked how he made
11 out. Is everything okay? He says yep, everything is
12 fine. Said I might tighten up one here, one there.
13 And that's typical from when I was on the car carriers
14 in the container ships. You tighten.

15 MR. KUCHARSKI: So nothing extraordinary
16 then?

17 MR. AXELSSON: Nothing. Nothing
18 extraordinary happened, no, that I can recall. No.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: When checking cargo at sea,
20 did the deck department or the chief mate use the
21 scuttle to number three hold?

22 MR. AXELSSON: I never asked him how he
23 went, but I would imagine so.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: On that ship you could go
25 ahead and enter number three from the engine room, too?

1 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, on the port side.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: And the scuttle to number
3 three on the second deck was on the starboard side?

4 Sorry, that's a question, not a statement.

5 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. It was on the starboard
6 side to my knowledge.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Just out of curiosity --

8 MR. AXELSSON: Are we going from second deck
9 down to three hold?

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes.

11 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, it was on the starboard
12 side.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: Starboard side. Just out of
14 curiosity, did you at sea did you walk around the
15 decks, take walks around the deck?

16 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, I have.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: Just to walk the decks?

18 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. The scuttles and
20 water-tight doors, when were opened at sea or if they
21 were opened at sea, were they logged somewhere?

22 MR. AXELSSON: Not that I recall. You mean
23 the scuttles?

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes.

25 MR. AXELSSON: Not that I recall.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: How often were the holds
2 checked on a routine basis at sea?

3 MR. AXELSSON: The best that I can recollect
4 is the chief mate was there every morning, every day
5 and during the morning, yes.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: Now this question was asked
7 before or started to be -- heavy weather precautions
8 and you talked about taking extra fuel.

9 MR. AXELSSON: That was their policy.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Policy. Were there any
11 other specific precautions or policy that were adhered
12 to or taken for heavy weather?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Extra lashings. That was
14 also part of the cargo securing manual. As far as I
15 can recollect, I can remember for heavy weather.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you recollect any
17 directives for the operation of the plant for the
18 engine room?

19 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I don't recall
20 anything like that. I don't recollect anything.
21 Nothing comes --

22 MR. KUCHARSKI: Anything on the water-tight
23 doors or the scuttles when you expected heavy weather?

24 MR. AXELSSON: Everything was secured. And
25 I know, in fact, if -- when I was there, the chief mate

1 after he got off watch or I would go up there and if it
2 was after his watch at night, he took another turn to
3 make sure everything was closed, everything was dogged,
4 checked them all, before we went to bed. And I would
5 stay up and he had a radio and he did that. But I
6 never experienced any heavy weather. But we took the
7 precautions.

8 Everything was secured, nothing was moving.
9 It was the last turn, last turn of the deck. Everybody
10 was off. Had everybody off the deck and he would take
11 another turn. He had a radio and I would be up, that
12 everything was dogged, everything was closed. The deck
13 was tight. And he would come back to my office and we
14 would talk. That's what we did, but to be honest with
15 you, nothing ever materialized. I never experienced
16 any heavy weather with that ship. Never did, but we
17 took the precautions just in case, because you never
18 know what was going to happen and we monitored the
19 weather.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: To your recollection, there
21 wasn't any heavy weather checklist or anything that you
22 went down or that they went through?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Oh geez, there were so many
24 checklists that I can't recollect. There was a policy.
25 I do remember that, but I can't recite the policy and I

1 was -- I never -- first off, I never had the ship in
2 any heavy weather. I never did. I never did.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: But you mentioned about
4 making the diversion there.

5 MR. AXELSSON: I did, one time. But I
6 avoided it all.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Right, but there was heavy
8 weather out there.

9 MR. AXELSSON: There was.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: I was just wondering if
11 there was any checklist that -- a company-type
12 checklist. That's okay if you don't recollect.

13 MR. AXELSSON: I just can't recollect every
14 -- no. There are so many checklists. I can't recall,
15 you know, if I specifically did a checklist. That was
16 a while ago. That was quite some time ago when I did
17 that. It wasn't anything even recent.

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. When you walked about
19 the decks at sea, did you notice any scuttles open or
20 water-tight doors that were left open?

21 MR. AXELSSON: I did and there were men down
22 there working. I made sure somebody was down there and
23 make sure that damn thing gets closed. It's yours when
24 you come out. Close it and dog it. That was it. If
25 you're going down there to work, that's fine. They

1 did. But when they come out, make sure it's dogged.
2 There were guys down there. They were dogged. Same
3 thing with the scupper policy. You take that scupper
4 out, it's yours. Do whatever you're going to do. If
5 you have to drain water or whatever, it's your scupper,
6 so you put it back in. You own it. Close it.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Besides the scuttles, there
8 were on the second deck, there was a water-tight door
9 that went down to aft to steering, like a little
10 doghouse, if you will, a little house with the
11 water-tight door that dropped back down into aft to
12 steering and then you can get into number five hold.

13 MR. AXELSSON: Okay. All the way aft?

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: All the way aft.

15 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: And then there was another
17 small little doghouse with the water-tight door and the
18 escape trunk, the escape hatch from the engine room?

19 MR. AXELSSON: Correct. Just aft of -- what
20 do they call that?

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: Aft to the house? There was
22 a bunker tank there?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you recollect seeing
25 those open at any time?

1 MR. AXELSSON: I have. And we closed them.
2 In fact, that was the last turn of the day when that
3 mate went down there, checked all them doors,
4 everything is dogged. Everything.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: So they were open and he
6 dogged them down?

7 MR. AXELSSON: I don't know that he found
8 them open, because we all prepared for any kind of
9 weather and make sure everything is closed, keep
10 everything dogged. And the chief mate would just make
11 a round just to check before he turned in or even
12 before I laid down, let's do it. And we did.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: And when you went for your
14 little walks around the deck, did you ever notice that
15 aft to door the number that dropped down into aft to
16 steering or the escape hatch opened?

17 MR. AXELSSON: I have seen them open and we
18 closed them. They're coming up and down out of there.
19 Just keep them closed.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: The front and aft to end of
21 the house on the second deck, we went on board the El
22 Yunque and we saw like there's a set of steps going up
23 to the -- there's a door into the fidley. There's
24 doors forward in the aft to end. Did you see those
25 doors open?

1 MR. AXELSSON: I have seen that door open
2 and we closed it. Make sure they're closed. We
3 buttoned everything up. Buttoned everything up.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you know if that -- have
5 you ever heard talk about it being a hot engine room?

6 MR. AXELSSON: I have.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you hear of any problems
8 keeping the doors closed or the scuttles closed?
9 Operational-type problems where you had trouble keeping
10 them closed?

11 MR. AXELSSON: No. No. I don't recall
12 anything like that.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: How about the large
14 water-tight doors going into the cargo holds going down
15 the ramps and then from hold to hold?

16 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you have any problems
18 with those?

19 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. As a matter of
20 fact, we did the chalk test on them when I was there
21 just to make sure everything was working, all the doors
22 and when we went through the annuals there. We chalked
23 everything. Chief mate was good about that. We did
24 the chalk test on them. No, I don't recall any problem
25 there.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: Who was the chief mate at
2 that time? Do you remember?

3 MR. AXELSSON: I had Jaime Torres. Jaime
4 Torres did the chalk tests.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: Questions on the cargo?

6 LCDR [REDACTED] No.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Carrie? Okay. I'd like to
8 move into stability, unless Mike, you want to lead with
9 those or do you want me to lead?

10 LCDR [REDACTED] Sure. I can start out and
11 then if you'd like to fill in any blanks.

12 LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from the
13 Coast Guard. We're going to start on some stability
14 questions.

15 First of all, you mentioned reporting aboard
16 after the fructose tanks were added. Do you recall
17 after that change or modification, whether there was an
18 update to the trim and stability booklet or to your on
19 board carbo max loading computer data as a result of
20 that change?

21 MR. AXELSSON: Not that I recall.

22 LCDR [REDACTED] In general, did you see
23 any other weight changes to the ship during your time
24 on board? And did you see any updates to the trim and
25 stability booklet or cargo max?

1 MR. AXELSSON: Are you asking me about
2 weight changes?

3 LCDR [REDACTED] Weight changes or
4 modifications to the vessel, things that would affect
5 stability?

6 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir.

7 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

8 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall anything like
9 that, no.

10 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. Are you aware
11 whether the crew could input the loading of the
12 fructose tanks into the cargo max loading computer?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

14 LCDR [REDACTED] They could.

15 MR. AXELSSON: We did. Yes.

16 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

17 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, you could.

18 LCDR [REDACTED] Carrying on, stability
19 calculation process. Would you say that it was mostly
20 the chief mate that was involved in the calculating of
21 stability or was it more of a receiving info from a
22 stevedore or something of that sort?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Well, the chief mate did all
24 the stability.

25 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

1 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, chief mate conducted all
2 of the stability.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: It's Mike Kucharski. I'd
4 like to -- when you say he did all the stability, could
5 you maybe walk us through the process, the review
6 process just in Jacksonville. Did you get a pre-stow
7 plan before the ship got in?

8 MR. AXELSSON: I do know that -- no. Prior
9 to the ship getting in, no, he did not get a pre-stow,
10 no.

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: So when you say the chief
12 mate was responsible for stability, so did he calculate
13 all the stability on the vessel? They gave him the
14 weights and he put them all in and calculated the
15 stability?

16 MR. AXELSSON: Correct. Yes.

17 MR. KUCHARSKI: So when did he do this?
18 When did he actually get the final stow plan to put all
19 this information in?

20 MR. AXELSSON: Before sailing.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was it like six hours before
22 sailing? An hour before? A half hour? Give us an
23 approximate idea.

24 MR. AXELSSON: Maybe 15 minutes before
25 sailing.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: Okay. So he gets the final
2 stow plan and in 15 minutes he's going to input all
3 that into the stability computer, every container and
4 trailer on there?

5 MR. AXELSSON: No. The stability was also
6 done through Don Matthews right in the office. They
7 had the same program, the same thing that our chief
8 mate was using and Mr. Matthews had it all printed out,
9 Don Matthews did and we verified all his numbers with
10 our program. We verified everything.

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: When you say you verified --

12 MR. AXELSSON: He got the manifest, all the
13 weights. He had all the cargo holds, all the
14 containers. He had everything and he would just -- he
15 would plug them into our cargo max and it was -- they
16 had the same program. To my knowledge, everything
17 would agree.

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: So the -- you say they gave
19 him sheets. Did they also give him something to plug
20 into his computer so you wouldn't have to manually put
21 everything in there?

22 MR. AXELSSON: We didn't have a zip drive
23 there, no. It was all done manually.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: All done manually on the El
25 Faro?

1 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: So then the review was
3 reviewing the sheets that they gave you or they gave
4 the chief mate would review it?

5 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: And then would he present
7 these to you? Did you look them over?

8 MR. AXELSSON: I did look at them. I made
9 sure I always had my .5 margin above my required
10 because I knew that in transit I would always arrive
11 beyond my required GN (phonetic). I was never at it or
12 short. I was always greater. I knew what my burn off
13 was.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Burn off being --

15 MR. AXELSSON: The fuel. I knew what my
16 options were. I could add water if I needed to for the
17 burn off and I had a window. I always had -- so I was
18 always greater than my required.

19 MR. KUCHARSKI: So .5, was that yours that
20 you chose or was that a company --

21 MR. AXELSSON: I think I did speak with Mike
22 Ritchie (phonetic) as to what he was doing and we both
23 were using .5, thereabouts, as far as I can recollect.
24 That's where that came in. I was getting my head
25 wrapped around the whole thing myself. And every time

1 I knew what my burn was going to be. I knew what I had
2 and I would always arrive greater than my required GN.
3 I never dipped below it and never was at it.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: Who was Mike Ritchie?

5 MR. AXELSSON: He was the captain on the El
6 Yunque that I spoke with. I was getting an idea myself
7 how the guys were doing.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: So it wasn't a company
9 policy?

10 MR. AXELSSON: Not that I recall, no. Not
11 that I recall.

12 MR. KUCHARSKI: You mentioned the ship did
13 not get a pre-stow.

14 MR. AXELSSON: They had a morning meeting,
15 all the time when we got in on arrival. We didn't get
16 it prior. There was always a meeting with Don Matthews
17 and the chief mate on what was going to be happening
18 that day and what was going to be done. They were down
19 in his office. They always had some kind of a meeting.
20 And they would talk all day long as to what's going on
21 and how things were going, where we're all at. I mean
22 he was in constant contact with them.

23 It wasn't just, you know, he wasn't paying
24 attention. No, they were talking all the time, all the
25 time, as to what was going on, what was being loaded,

1 what we got, what may not show up, where we're going to
2 be and this was on-going conversations the whole time.

3 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you hear this on the
4 radio, them talking back and forth?

5 MR. AXELSSON: Sometimes. Sometimes it was
6 on their cell phones.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you ever have to make
8 any changes to stows once you got this -- the final
9 stow plan, the stability sheets from Don Matthews or
10 from shore side?

11 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. I made them take it
12 off. I want my .5. No. Don't even load it. And they
13 didn't.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did that happen
15 more than once?

16 MR. AXELSSON: No, I wouldn't say it was
17 often, but he would call me. He says would you go .45?
18 Would you do this? No. I want .5, Don. Okay, just
19 thought I'd ask.

20 MR. KUCHARSKI: So that was before you
21 actually got the stability figures?

22 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. He would call me on the
23 phone and say no, no.

24 LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from the
25 Coast Guard. In your experience on the El Faro, how
26 close were the actual observed drafts to those

1 calculated by the cargo max loading computer?

2 MR. AXELSSON: They were off a little bit.
3 They were off a little bit. Sometimes -- that wasn't
4 uncommon with any of those loading programs. Any ones
5 that I've ever used.

6 LCDR [REDACTED] How much can you quantify?
7 And how much is a little bit and in which direction?

8 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I really don't
9 recollect.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: This is Mike Kucharski, a
11 point of clarification. When you say actual cargo max,
12 are you talking about visual cargo max?

13 LCDR [REDACTED] That's what I wanted --
14 and I also would like to know -- this is Mike
15 [REDACTED] from the Coast Guard again. So visual
16 drafts, actual reading on the side of the vessel versus
17 the (inaudible) computer output. In other words, what
18 are you actually seeing in reality?

19 MR. AXELSSON: There's always going to be a
20 little bit of a discrepancy here. Is it dark out? Is
21 it in the curvature of the hull? Where was it? Did
22 you get a good read on it? Was it water lapping? Do
23 you have a little bit of a sea run past there?
24 Sometimes they can all be -- they can be difficult.

25 LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from the

1 Coast Guard again. Was it an assignment of the chief
2 mate to read the draft before departing?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Oh, yes. It was the chief
4 mate.

5 LCDR [REDACTED] And were they read on both
6 sides of the vessel typically?

7 MR. AXELSSON: Mid-ship.

8 LCDR [REDACTED] Mid-ship.

9 MR. AXELSSON: Read on both sides. Yes.

10 LCDR [REDACTED] So when you say read at
11 mid-ship, are you referring to load mark or --

12 MR. AXELSSON: There's a mid-ship mark
13 there. There's a draft there. You can actually read
14 it. Physically read them.

15 LCDR [REDACTED] So you wouldn't typically
16 look for trim differences or differences other than
17 just a mid-mark?

18 MR. AXELSSON: What are you asking me? Is
19 there a trim difference?

20 LCDR [REDACTED] Right. This is Mike
21 [REDACTED] from the Coast Guard again. What I'm
22 specifically asking is when you looked at for the
23 visual drafts on the side of the hull, did you ask the
24 chief mate to record the forward and aft marks?

25 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

1 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. And did you see any
2 trim differences from the cargo max output?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Not that I recall. Not that
4 I -- I can't remember all those numbers.

5 LCDR [REDACTED] I understand. Did you
6 ever see a difference in the list or keel of the vessel
7 due to the loading versus cargo max in actual observed
8 condition?

9 MR. AXELSSON: You mean --

10 LCDR [REDACTED] Would the vessel ever have
11 a list of a certain angle at port or starboard instead
12 of being even keel? Would there be a difference from
13 what's expected from the loading computer?

14 MR. AXELSSON: I do recall if I was even
15 keel and it would show another -- like an angle of keel
16 on the computer?

17 LCDR [REDACTED] Right.

18 MR. AXELSSON: Well --

19 LCDR [REDACTED] Was there a difference?

20 MR. AXELSSON: Sometimes. It could be.

21 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you recall typically --

22 MR. AXELSSON: How much?

23 LCDR [REDACTED] Yes.

24 MR. AXELSSON: No.

25 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. When the chief mate

1 recorded the drafts did he also record the salinity?

2 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

3 LCDR [REDACTED] Was there ever a permanent
4 list on the vessel that you recall on the El Faro, like
5 one that you'd always have to load the cargo to one
6 side or the other to account for?

7 MR. AXELSSON: No, not that I recall.

8 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. When you did notice
9 or your chief mate did notice differences between the
10 actual measured drafts, list, and trim from the cargo
11 max data, would that be recorded and provided to
12 someone like Don Matthews?

13 MR. AXELSSON: I know I've talked with Don
14 Matthews about that. I've told him about it and I
15 wanted to know if -- that the weight was in the boxes.
16 And he assured me that everything was weighed prior to
17 be putting on.

18 LCDR [REDACTED] Did you ever have a
19 discussion with Don Matthews or anything else about
20 needing the program to be closer to actual observed
21 condition? And were there ever any corrections made?

22 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall any of those
23 conversations.

24 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. In your opinion,
25 how close to the load volume marks were you typically

1 asked to load the vessel?

2 MR. AXELSSON: How close?

3 LCDR [REDACTED] Yes.

4 MR. AXELSSON: Sometimes to the mark. But
5 you know, a lot of times that didn't even materialize.
6 We still had plenty. They told us we would probably be
7 there, but we weren't. We were not.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: Mike Kucharski. I'd like to
9 follow on on that. Was the ship ever at the marks when
10 you sailed?

11 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

12 MR. KUCHARSKI: Was that mostly on the
13 southbound voyage?

14 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

15 LCDR [REDACTED] This is [REDACTED]
16 from the Coast Guard again. One more follow up on the
17 load line. Was there ever a point in time where you
18 noticed that the marks were not submerged, but cargo
19 max was showing a load line displacement above the
20 required displacement as part of your load line
21 assignment?

22 MR. AXELSSON: Wait a minute. Say that
23 again?

24 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. I'll try to explain
25 it a little better. When you have a load line

1 assigned, you have a free board assignment as well as a
2 corresponding displacement of the vessel. Have you
3 ever noticed the time where your marks are not
4 submerged, but your displacement on the cargo max output
5 is above the load line displacement?

6 MR. AXELSSON: No. I don't recall anything
7 like that. I don't. I don't know. I don't really
8 recall anything like that.

9 LCDR [REDACTED] That's okay.

10 MR. AXELSSON: Why are you laughing or
11 smiling?

12 MR. KUCHARSKI: No, maybe sometimes a lack
13 of clarity in the question to begin with.

14 LCDR [REDACTED] It's a difficult question.
15 It's hard.

16 MR. KUCHARSKI: This is Mike Kucharski. I
17 see what he's trying to ask. Have you ever noticed it
18 was not down to the marks and on the computer it showed
19 that you had more than what it should?

20 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall anything like
21 that.

22 LCDR [REDACTED] The computer versus
23 reality.

24 MR. KUCHARSKI: Exactly.

25 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall that, no.

1 LCDR [REDACTED] It can also be caused by
2 like a hog condition or something like that where the
3 vessel is not perfectly straight, things like that.
4 But if you don't recall, that's okay.

5 This is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] from the Coast Guard
6 again, prior to carriage of the fructose cargo, were
7 you on board at all or was it only after carriage of
8 fructose that you were operating on El Faro?

9 MR. AXELSSON: To my knowledge, it was only
10 after the fructose tanks were on there.

11 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

12 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

13 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you recall related to
14 that carriage of fructose cargo how many vehicles or
15 trailers would have typically been in those holds on
16 the same tank tops?

17 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I don't recall
18 that.

19 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

20 MR. AXELSSON: Wait a minute, let's back up.
21 Yes, I think for three weeks while the El Yunque was in
22 the shipyard, I think -- we ran it for three weeks.
23 That had to have been shop rated in March. The
24 fructose tanks weren't on there. Yeah. It would have
25 been in March now that I think about it. I think the

1 sister ship had to go into the shipyard, so they
2 brought the El Faro back out. She ran on that run
3 until the El Yunque came back on the run. The fructose
4 tanks wouldn't have been on there. That's true. Then
5 she went back up to lay up.

6 LCDR [REDACTED] So you do have some
7 recollection that this was El Yunque that you saw
8 carrying vehicles in holds one and two or is it El
9 Faro?

10 MR. AXELSSON: Oh, no. It probably would
11 have been the El Faro because the El Yunque went to the
12 shipyard. I was never on the El Yunque.

13 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. So you saw El Faro
14 carrying vehicles in holds one and two?

15 MR. AXELSSON: Runs in my mind, yes. I
16 imagine it would be during that three weeks.

17 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you have any
18 recollection of the number?

19 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I do not. No, sir.

20 LCDR [REDACTED] Post the 2014 install of
21 the fructose tanks, did you notice any changes in the
22 vessel's stability or handling, its draft, trim, or
23 list as a result?

24 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. Nothing comes out
25 that I can think of, no.

1 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you recall if the El
2 Faro maintains a ramp compensating tank on the port
3 side of the vessel to counteract the weight of vehicle
4 ramps located on the starboard side?

5 MR. AXELSSON: You're calling them ramp
6 tanks?

7 LCDR [REDACTED] I'll explain where this is
8 coming from. Sun Shipbuilding's website indicates that
9 they installed a ramp compensating tank on the port
10 side of these vessels to counteract the weight of
11 vehicle ramps installed on the starboard side. Do you
12 recall a tank like that or ever using one?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Oh, they had on there what
14 they called ramp tanks, but they were saddle tanks.
15 There was one port, one starboard.

16 LCDR [REDACTED] Did you use them for
17 specifics to loading when you were loading or were they
18 always used or never used?

19 MR. AXELSSON: No, they were used. I think
20 they used them as keel tanks.

21 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

22 MR. AXELSSON: Anti-keeling tanks. Yes.

23 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. But to the best of
24 your recollection you don't think it was necessarily
25 used specifically for loading?

1 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. Not to my
2 knowledge, no.

3 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. Why are you looking
4 at me, man?

5 (Laughter.)

6 MR. KUCHARSKI: You don't want me to look at
7 you? I look at everybody. How do you know I'm looking
8 at you, do you have eyes on the side of your head?

9 MR. AXELSSON: I can see.

10 (Laughter.)

11 MR. KUCHARSKI: I'm agreeing with you.

12 MR. AXELSSON: It's like you're drilling a
13 hole right through my head, man.

14 (Laughter.)

15 He's drilling me this way, you're drilling
16 me this way. I'm kidding.

17 LCDR [REDACTED] This is my last question.
18 So Mike [REDACTED] from the Coast Guard. Was the chief
19 mate or another officer on board trained in the use of
20 cargo max to calculate damage to vessel stability in
21 relation to a flooded compartment?

22 MR. AXELSSON: No.

23 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you happen to know if
24 it had that capability?

25 MR. AXELSSON: Cargo max?

1 LCDR [REDACTED] Cargo max, yes.

2 MR. AXELSSON: I can't offer you an honest
3 answer on that.

4 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

5 MR. AXELSSON: I just don't recollect at
6 this point.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Mike Kucharski. I won't say
8 from the NTSB. I think everybody knows I'm from the
9 NTSB. So you never ran any calculation just playing
10 around with the computer to see what would happen if
11 you flooded this or put water in such and such?

12 MR. AXELSSON: I can't say that I have. I
13 can't say that I have.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Would you consider it easy
15 or tough to make stability on that ship, to keep
16 stability on the ship?

17 MR. AXELSSON: Tough?

18 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes. Let's say going
19 southbound that you had to -- you wanted to make sure
20 that you had to have half a foot leaving, leaving
21 minimum of half a foot from Jacksonville?

22 MR. AXELSSON: No. I did not ever have an
23 issue that prompted me to make sure -- that's the
24 thing. I can't think of anything during the voyage
25 that ever would have -- that comes to mind that I would

1 have said ooh, man, I want more than this. No.

2 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did you have to take
3 ballasts going southbound?

4 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I did not. No,
5 sir. I did not. But I could have. I always knew I
6 had that option.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Where would you put it?
8 What option did you have?

9 MR. AXELSSON: Well, I had 1A center line
10 and I had 1B forward, it was on the starboard. 1B.
11 And I always knew I had them and then I think number
12 two double bottoms were always empty. Runs in my mind
13 that two double bottoms were always empty.

14 MR. KUCHARSKI: Would you, from when you
15 started as master on the El Faro, did the load -- the
16 weight of the loads change the average loads leaving
17 out of Jacksonville? From when you started to when you
18 finished up on El Faro, did you see any increase or
19 decrease in the weights that were put on?

20 MR. AXELSSON: You mean total tons?

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: Yes.

22 MR. AXELSSON: They all averaged about the
23 same. Some were a little heavier. Some were lighter.
24 Nothing rings my bell that was significant.

25 MR. KUCHARSKI: This was mentioned before.

1 Did you note the ship carried a hog or a sag? You left
2 on the finish of the load in Jacksonville.

3 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall. Well, it
4 didn't have a sag, no. It was a hog.

5 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you recollect any
6 additional precautions that were needed to keep damage
7 stability for the vessel?

8 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir.

9 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you recollect if there
10 were any wind calculations for the stability manual,
11 wind conditions?

12 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

13 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you know what they were?

14 MR. AXELSSON: What do you mean?

15 MR. KUCHARSKI: What wind, 5 knots, 50
16 knots, 100 knots?

17 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall the exact wind
18 knots. They had it in there for, it was going to be
19 three tier, four tier, five tier. I do recall that,
20 but the exact knots, I don't recall.

21 MR. KUCHARSKI: You talked earlier about the
22 deck scuppers, if you took them out, if you owned them,
23 you put them back in. On departure, were all the
24 scuppers removed or were they left in, the plugs?

25 MR. AXELSSON: Removed.

1 MR. KUCHARSKI: They were removed.

2 MR. AXELSSON: As far as I know, to the best
3 of my knowledge, they were removed.

4 MR. KUCHARSKI: Did the vessel have any
5 trouble with collection of water on the second deck or
6 main deck?

7 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. Not that I recall.

8 MR. KUCHARSKI: I'm finished with my
9 stability questions.

10 MS. BELL: I have one question. Carrie
11 Bell. Was there any pressure to carry more cargo than
12 you were comfortable with?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Like I said, I always come
14 close to 5.5. I told Don, no. They never pushed me.
15 They just said okay, just thought I'd ask. That was
16 it. And nobody ever came back to me later.

17 MS. BELL: Okay. Thank you.

18 LCDR [REDACTED] One more. This is [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED] Just one more stability question. Did you
20 know if there was any limitation on the number of
21 partially-filled tanks you could have on board?

22 MR. AXELSSON: I thought about that. And it
23 runs in my mind, near as I can recollect, it was four,
24 not including fuel tanks. Fuel is a given.

25 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you know if that would

1 have been common knowledge or somehow protected in
2 cargo mats?

3 MR. AXELSSON: I talked to the chief mate
4 about it. And I always asked him, how many? And
5 that's how we remember that number. It had to be four.
6 He said no. And I said okay. No more.

7 MR. KUCHARSKI: Do you want to take a break?
8 Want to get a smoke?

9 LCDR [REDACTED] Sure.

10 MR. KUCHARSKI: Take a break. It's 1:28.

11 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
12 off the record at 1:28 p.m. and resumed at 2:10 p.m.)

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: On the record.
14 Good afternoon again. It is now 2:10 p.m. And we're
15 restarting the interview with Eric Axelsson.

16 Eric, I would like to move into some
17 questions, structural questions. Did you notice any
18 structural type problems, hole plating, any cracks in
19 the decks, the hole plating, in the welds while you
20 were a captain on the El Faro? And when I say did you
21 notice, was it brought to your attention?

22 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How about water in
24 the hulls? Did you ever get water in the hulls?

25 MR. AXELSSON: Not to my knowledge. No,

1 sir. No, not to my knowledge.

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Were you ever in a
3 head sea with the ship?

4 MR. AXELSSON: Usually a couple points off
5 the bow. Not dead on, no.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. A couple
7 points off the bow. You'd been on tankers. Did you
8 notice the hull panting at all when you were --

9 MR. AXELSSON: On the tankers?

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No, on the El Faro.

11 MR. AXELSSON: No.

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you notice it
13 on tankers?

14 MR. AXELSSON: Tankers, yes.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did the El Faro
16 ever do anything like that?

17 MR. AXELSSON: No, I never saw anything like
18 that. I've been on plenty of container ships and I was
19 on the G class. I would recognize it because you can
20 actually see all the containers sit there and move and
21 watch the weight hit the bow. You can watch them.
22 It's like a big landing strip.

23 I saw nothing like that on here. And I was
24 watching because I was familiar with that. I always
25 looked. You could see the containers physically move.

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You mentioned that
2 you didn't typically see any standing water on the
3 second deck or the main deck. There were some
4 modifications made to the deck drains. Do you have any
5 idea why they were modified?

6 MR. AXELSSON: I wasn't even aware of
7 modifications to the deck drains. You know there was a
8 -- Let me back up. I was thinking about that earlier
9 when I was trying to think back. I think it was the El
10 Faro.

11 There was only one occasion. What do they
12 call that on the second deck? They had a name for it.
13 It's right there on the starboard side, that cutout
14 there. I forget what they called it.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The starboard side
16 of the second deck?

17 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. Just right there at the
18 house. That little space they had there. I think
19 that's where the diesel tank was there. They had a
20 name for it. They always called it. I don't remember
21 the name.

22 But I do remember that we were testing the
23 sprinkler system for the annual coming up just
24 recently. And I remember water collected right there.
25 And as a matter of fact, the chief that's there, Chief

1 Rich, it was him and I. I saw water collect there and
2 I said, "What's going on there?"

3 And he said, "There's a drain there." And
4 it was plugged and we cleaned it out. That was the
5 only time that I saw a collection of water, standing
6 water, on the deck. We were in San Juan doing a
7 sprinkler system in port. And they snaked it.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Not even rainwater
9 or anything collecting there where you walk on the ship
10 throughout there.

11 MR. AXELSSON: No, no. Rainwater and stuff,
12 no. No, sir. I don't recall. Nothing comes to mind
13 on that. That's the only thing that I can recall with
14 the water and we were doing the sprinkler system. It
15 was in on the second deck there.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Do you know if
17 there was an overboard valve that had to be opened for
18 the deck drains?

19 MR. AXELSSON: No. Not that I know of. No.
20 From two deck?

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

22 MR. AXELSSON: Wait a minute. Do you mean
23 for the drains?

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes.

25 MR. AXELSSON: No, not that I can recall.

1 LCDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Do you
2 remember hearing that the ship was built for ice
3 operations or might have some larger design scantlings
4 or thicknesses for ice operations?

5 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I don't recall
6 anything like that.

7 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you remember or have
8 any awareness of the remaining plate thicknesses on the
9 El Faro after corrosion or any gaugings?

10 MR. AXELSSON: I do remember in the shipyard
11 in Freeport ABS did take some gaugings, yes. ABS did.
12 And I can't remember exactly where they took those
13 gaugings at.

14 LCDR [REDACTED] They took gauging at the
15 -- Was this the shipyard in Jacksonville?

16 MR. AXELSSON: No. That was in Freeport.

17 LCDR [REDACTED] In Freeport.

18 MR. AXELSSON: Bahamas.

19 LCDR [REDACTED] Freeport, Bahamas, gotcha.

20 MR. AXELSSON: I know they took some -- I'm
21 pretty sure that that's what they were doing. They
22 wanted to go in certain tanks and they did. And there
23 was some gauging that they wanted to do. I'm almost
24 positive it was gauging. And that was completed as
25 well.

1 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. Earlier, you
2 mentioned that you thought in general that the vessel
3 would hog more than sag. Do you remember any
4 difference between the north and south routes on
5 something like that?

6 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I don't recall any
7 of the figures.

8 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. Do you remember
9 hearing about a reduced sagging, still water vending
10 moment allowance that ABS applied via engineering
11 comment in July 2015?

12 MR. AXELSSON: Repeat that.

13 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay. Do you remember
14 hearing about a reduction in sagging still water
15 vending moment allowance?

16 MR. AXELSSON: No, I don't recall anything
17 like that.

18 LCDR [REDACTED] Okay.

19 MR. AXELSSON: That's something I would
20 remember. No.

21 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you remember hearing
22 about any deck loading restrictions or reduced scalings
23 based on corrosion control?

24 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. No, I don't.

25 LCDR [REDACTED] Earlier it was asked

1 whether you witnessed any cracking or hear about any
2 cracking. But have you witnessed or heard of any
3 buckling of plate? Buckling or main structural members
4 or any kind of -- something other than a crack or
5 another type of structural failure?

6 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I can't recall
7 anything. Wow.

8 LCDR [REDACTED] Did you ever hear of any
9 structural issues on sister vessels to this vessel that
10 would result in fleet wide repairs or modifications?

11 MR. AXELSSON: No, I don't recall any
12 conversation like that coming up. No.

13 LCDR [REDACTED] Did you happen to hear of
14 any structural problems related to the mid body plug on
15 this vessel or a sister?

16 MR. AXELSSON: The mid body section?

17 LCDR [REDACTED] The mid body plug where
18 they put the 90 foot section?

19 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I don't. I don't
20 know of anything like that. I don't recall any.

21 LCDR [REDACTED] What was your overall
22 opinion of the vessel structural adequacy?

23 MR. AXELSSON: I'll tell you just what I
24 told when all those Walmart people came down to the
25 office. They said, "We just showed them around your

1 relic."

2 And I said, "She's not a relic. It's a
3 Cadillac." And I thought of her that way. To me, it
4 was a good ship and I liked it. I liked her. I did.
5 I didn't have any reason to believe otherwise. I
6 honestly didn't. To me, she was a Cadillac.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: This is Mike
8 Kucharski. Regarding the plant or mechanical end, did
9 you use bridge control on that ship?

10 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Were there any
12 overspeed problems?

13 MR. AXELSSON: No. No, sir. I don't -- No.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Were there any
15 problems with the steering gear, the reduction gear or
16 the boilers?

17 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. The only thing that
18 went on with the steering gear that I can recall was
19 during the COI. There was the Coast Guard that brought
20 it up. And they made a repair on the steering gear
21 that there was a part that should have been replaced
22 every five years on that class. And that was
23 completed.

24 That was completed as soon as we got back to
25 Jacksonville. We went right back to Jacksonville and

1 they were down. ABS was in attendance when it was
2 cleared. That was the only thing that I recall.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I had asked you
4 earlier on the El Morro if you were aware of the ship
5 losing the propulsion or the power plant. How about on
6 the El Faro?

7 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I never lost the
8 power plant on the El Faro. There was only one
9 instance that I did report. When I left San Juan,
10 dropped the pilot, I got a call from the chief engineer
11 that he had to stop the screw.

12 And I said okay. "Do what you've got to do.
13 Do it quick."

14 And he did. And I had back up and running
15 within 10 or 15 minutes. But somebody had opened the
16 wrong valve and dumped the lube oil. And he had to
17 stop. He had to refilled the gravity tank, took care
18 of it.

19 I reported it to the Coast Guard. I filled
20 out a 2692 once we were in the office. When we got
21 back to Jacksonville, they did their own company
22 investigation. I spoke with the Coast Guard and they
23 came out with a policy. They took care of that so it
24 never would happen again. I certainly didn't want it
25 to happen again. That's for damn sure.

1 That would have been the only time. And
2 that was a -- They called it a -- They had a name for a
3 shutdown. What was the term they used? I can't even
4 think now. Controlled shutdown they called it and it
5 was a controlled shutdown. That's the term they used.

6 And I reported it to the Coast Guard. And I
7 was on the phone with them. I got back to
8 Jacksonville. We all were there. The company did
9 their company investigation and everything and their
10 plan and policy. And that never happened again. And I
11 certainly didn't want it to happen again.

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: That was the lube
13 oil to the reduction gears.

14 MR. AXELSSON: I imagine that's what it went
15 to because you had to stop the screw. It went to the
16 bearings. Bearings. The guy opened up the wrong valve
17 and dumped the tank, the gravity tank. And it would
18 have fried the bearings I guess.

19 But that was the only time. And I submitted
20 it to the Coast Guard and to the company.

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You mentioned about
22 taking extra fuel as a heavy weather precaution.

23 MR. AXELSSON: That was a company policy.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Company policy.

25 MR. AXELSSON: That was a company policy.

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was there any
2 company policy as far as the amount of lube oil to have
3 in the lube oil sump to the reduction gears?

4 MR. AXELSSON: I don't know that. That
5 would be with the chief engineer. And I never even
6 gave him this. I talked to him and everything was
7 good. We're all good to go. Everything is fine. And
8 any issue? None. I mean I didn't really understand
9 why until I knew. If you've got any issues speak up
10 now and there weren't any. And I didn't have any
11 problems. I didn't have any problems. And I talked to
12 him through the course of the day, every day.

13 But as far as a policy for the amount of
14 lube oil, that I don't know. That I would say ask the
15 chief. I don't know. I don't recall anything.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did the bilge
17 system in the holds, was that fully operational?

18 MR. AXELSSON: What do you mean the bilge
19 system?

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: They have a system
21 to go ahead and pump the holds.

22 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Was it tested
24 regularly?

25 MR. AXELSSON: Bilge were tested once a

1 month. All the bilges alarms and, yes, she could pump.
2 I think it was done by the ABS and the Coast Guard tom
3 make sure everything was working. Yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: But you say the
5 alarms are tested. Were the pumps actually tested?
6 Did they try to pump the holds?

7 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, because sometimes they
8 had to pressure wash to clean it. And, yes, we tested
9 it. It did work. Yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Any maintenance
11 problems with the plant propulsion that you're aware
12 of?

13 MR. AXELSSON: No. Propulsion and plant
14 problems, no.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Critical parts or
16 important parts, did they arrive timely?

17 MR. AXELSSON: To my knowledge, they did.
18 Chief always had what he had or he always seemed to
19 have a spare or if he needed anything he always ordered
20 another one. So he always had one in transit or
21 whatever. If he needed parts or anything, it wasn't
22 going to be an issue.

23 I do recall that if they did have a problem,
24 even with Chief Rich, they let me know. Because I will
25 call them. Not a problem. They all knew that. If

1 they needed something and you're not getting any
2 satisfaction, you let me know. To me, their feelings
3 did not enter into anything I was doing.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Weather products.
5 What weather products did you typically look at?

6 MR. AXELSSON: Weather products.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Anything while
8 you're on board the ship. Weather information about
9 upcoming weather.

10 MR. AXELSSON: Well, I had the bottom fuel
11 access system. I had that. But I always cross-checked
12 it with the SATC with the high seas forecast.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How did that come
14 in? By SATC?

15 MR. AXELSSON: By SATC? And I always had
16 that and they were always close. So I always had the
17 mornings through the SATC and the bon voyage (phonetic)
18 system. I always compared them to see what bon voyage
19 is saying the storms were doing. They were tropical
20 storms, wherever they are, versus what high seas
21 forecast is.

22 And if there were tropical depressions out
23 there, I would do the same thing and match it with who
24 has who moving where. And when the next alert came up,
25 I always made sure to call me when the next alert comes

1 up. And then I would look for the wind shift and
2 certain things going on. What is the barometer doing?
3 What's the wind shift doing? What are the seas doing?
4 They were my tools.

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You mentioned about
6 the barometer and wind speed. Did the El Faro have a
7 reliable barometer and anemometer and weather vane?

8 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. We had an anemometer
9 and we had the barometer, yes. But from time to time,
10 we had a problem with the anemometer. There was always
11 do some kind of maintenance to it. But they had one.
12 But just going out there, you can see it.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How about NAVTEXT
14 (phonetic)?

15 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, sir. We had a NAVTEXT,
16 but sometimes just like any NAVTEXT, you don't get
17 certain -- some characters. You know how it comes in
18 garbled and it would give you just some things. So we
19 always compared them with the high weather forecast,
20 the high seas and whatever the National Weather Service
21 or King Service was doing.

22 The next alerts came out. We'd look at them
23 and make sure we'd got and compare them with the bomb
24 bilge. They had the bon voyage system also on the
25 bridge. So any time I got an update I sent it to the

1 bridge and they could update it up there as well. They
2 came in automatically at certain hours. It was all
3 available to all of us to check it.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How were
5 significant weather changes communicated to you?

6 MR. AXELSSON: Well, through the SATC and
7 through the bon voyage system. It would be the BVS
8 system. We were looking at the weather all the time.

9 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Nothing from the
10 office come in.

11 MR. AXELSSON: I don't recall ever receiving
12 anything from the office about any weather changes
13 other than the fact that if I was going to deviate and
14 I did that one time is all I had to do. And I let them
15 know.

16 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did the use of a
17 weather routing service ever come up in discussions?

18 MR. AXELSSON: I checked into that. And we
19 were not hooked up to anything, to a weather router.
20 We didn't have that aspect of the BVS system.

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you ask anybody
22 in the office about that?

23 MR. AXELSSON: I did. I asked Don Matthews
24 if we had that side of it. And I was in there. I was
25 just playing around with it one day to see if I could

1 connect. And I couldn't. So I asked him that and we
2 didn't have that. As I recall, we didn't have that
3 side of it. We just had the weather.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Now Don Matthews
5 worked for Portis (phonetic)?

6 MR. AXELSSON: No, he was with SeaStar. He's
7 the one that always updated that bill supposedly. He
8 was the contact for the BVS system. And I guess he
9 paid the annual or the monthly. But we didn't have
10 that portion.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I'm confused. Don
12 Matthews at SeaStar.

13 MR. AXELSSON: He's at SeaStar. I didn't
14 bring it up with TOTE Services. No, I did not.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Maybe I'm missing
16 something. Who's the terminal manager for TOTE
17 Maritime Services in --

18 MR. AXELSSON: Terminal manager for TOTE
19 Services?

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes. TOTE Marine
21 in Jacksonville.

22 MR. AXELSSON: I always dealt with Don
23 Matthews or Ron Rodriguez was there in SeaStar and TOTE
24 was always -- I was dealing mostly with Harry Rogers,
25 but then he left. And I can't remember the other man's

1 name.

2 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So after Harry
3 Rogers left, who were you dealing with at TOTE
4 Services?

5 MR. AXELSSON: Jim Fisker-Andersen, Tim
6 Neisson (phonetic).

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So when it came to
8 bon voyage and the weather system you went to Jim
9 Fisker-Andersen who was engineering. He ran the port
10 engineers or you went to Lee Anderson who --

11 MR. AXELSSON: Lee who?

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I'm sorry. Lee
13 Peterson.

14 MR. AXELSSON: Lee Peterson moved on long
15 before that. He was dealing with I guess the new
16 ships. So it was Jim Fisker-Andersen and Tim Neisson I
17 always talked to. Then another man came on board, but
18 he was only there briefly when I left. Another port
19 engineer was brought on line.

20 But then I think it Don Matthews was the one
21 that. I'm almost positive it was Don Matthews. He
22 made sure we were always still connected to the bon
23 voyage system which I think he had it as well.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Is this the same
25 Don Matthews who normally computed the stability for

1 the vessel?

2 MR. AXELSSON: That's correct.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And he worked at
4 the terminal there at SeaStar.

5 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, he did. Right at the
6 dock.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And he worked for
8 Ron Rodriguez who was the terminal manager.

9 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, that would be Ron. Yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And he was the one
11 you went to with the weather system, the bon voyage and
12 talked about the -- you mentioned about the weather
13 routing and --

14 MR. AXELSSON: It wasn't the -- I didn't do
15 weather routing with Don Matthews. Don Matthews had
16 the same -- I'm almost positive. Yes, Don Matthews had
17 the BVS system.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: That wasn't my
19 question. The weather routing service, remember I had
20 asked you about that.

21 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: And you said it had
23 the capability.

24 MR. AXELSSON: We didn't have that end of it
25 on the program.

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: But you said you
2 would talk to Don Matthews about the BVS system.

3 MR. AXELSSON: Sometimes, yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Sometimes. So if
5 you wanted the -- Did you ever ask to get the weather
6 routing service?

7 MR. AXELSSON: I did not. I asked him if we
8 had that end of it. And I couldn't send anything out
9 on that thing.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: I'm sorry.

11 MR. AXELSSON: I couldn't access that part
12 of the program, weather routing.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You mentioned the
14 El Faro had a good barometer and good anemometer.
15 Sometimes you had to work on the --

16 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, the anemometer.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The anemometer,
18 okay.

19 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Captain Davidson
21 stated he would pass 65 miles ahead of the tropical
22 storm or hurricane. Do you have any thoughts on that?

23 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. I do not.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Would you have
25 passed 65 miles ahead of the --

1 MR. AXELSSON: I don't know what that man
2 was looking at. I was not there. I don't know what he
3 was looking at. Don't even know what he was going
4 through.

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Let me say any
6 tropical storm or hurricane. Would you go 65 miles
7 from the center of the tropical storm or hurricane?

8 MR. AXELSSON: I really don't want to
9 speculate on that, sir.

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Would you want to
11 put the wind any particular position or seize any
12 position on that ship?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Are we -- What are we getting
14 at here?

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You say you handle
16 that ship, yes?

17 MR. AXELSSON: I have.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. Would you
19 have any preference in where you would put the wind or
20 seize on that ship if -- You said you were weather
21 routing for a storm out there and you went to the old
22 Bahamas Channel. Yes?

23 MR. AXELSSON: No, I did not go through Old
24 Bahamas.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: New Providence

1 Channel.

2 MR. AXELSSON: I went through Northeast
3 Providence, yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Northeast
5 Providence.

6 MR. AXELSSON: I ducked underneath and went
7 through Northeast Providence.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Had you ever
9 thought about where you would want to put the wind or
10 seize on that vessel?

11 MR. AXELSSON: A couple points on the
12 starboard bow and a couple points on the bow, she rode
13 good.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: To your knowledge,
15 had anyone conducted a risk analysis for storm
16 avoidance?

17 MR. AXELSSON: I'm not aware of anything.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Questions on
19 weather?

20 LCDR [REDACTED] No.

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Who was your direct
22 report at TOTE?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Say that again.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Who did you
25 directly report to TOTE Services?

1 MR. AXELSSON: Jim Fisker-Andersen and Tim
2 Niesson. They were the two contacts.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Who would give you
4 directions as far as ship scheduling went?

5 MR. AXELSSON: Scheduling was Don Matthews.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Let me understand
7 this. Don Matthews was scheduling, but TOTE Services
8 is who Jim Fisker-Andersen worked for and Tim Neisson.
9 So you would report to Jim Fisker-Andersen and Tim
10 Niesson. But you would get scheduling from Don
11 Matthews who worked for SeaStar.

12 MR. AXELSSON: Scheduling of the ship for in
13 and out of port, that's correct.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Mick Condraci
15 (phonetic), did you interface with Mick Condraci?

16 MR. AXELSSON: One time. One occasion.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The official
18 logbooks, what did you do with them when you filled up
19 an official logbook?

20 MR. AXELSSON: We only used a deck log. We
21 didn't have to keep an official.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So there was no
23 official logbook.

24 MR. AXELSSON: No.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How about amber

1 reports? Did the ship send in amber reports?

2 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, sir.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Any questions?

4 MS. BELL: A quick question. Carrie Bell,
5 NTSB. You mentioned that you have interacted once with
6 Mick Condraci. What was that regarding?

7 MR. AXELSSON: He came down to -- I think it
8 was -- Yes, he came down because he wanted to have a
9 meeting. And that was the only time. That was the
10 second week I was there that he came down.

11 MS. BELL: What kind of a meeting was that?

12 MR. AXELSSON: That was regarding the chief
13 mate.

14 MS. BELL: Can you elaborate on that?

15 MR. AXELSSON: I prefer not to. That's
16 between the chief mate and Mick Condraci. Maybe you
17 should hear it from them if you don't mind.

18 MS. BELL: Okay. No.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: This is Mike
20 Kucharski. I don't understand.

21 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, sir.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Who was the chief
23 mate?

24 MR. AXELSSON: Jamie Torres.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. So he had a

1 conversation. Mick Condraci came on the ship to have a
2 conversation with you about Jamie Torres.

3 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay. How about
5 Kevin Stith?

6 MR. AXELSSON: I don't even know the man.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You don't know the
8 man.

9 MS. BELL: I have another question about the
10 reporting. So if you have someone on your ship that
11 you feel like should not be on the ship, do you have
12 the authority to terminate or do you recommend that to
13 someone at TOTE? How does that work?

14 MR. AXELSSON: I would contact Mick
15 Condraci.

16 MS. BELL: And may a referral or something?

17 MR. AXELSSON: What am I doing?

18 MS. BELL: If you are disciplining or
19 terminating an employee? Is that something that you --

20 MR. AXELSSON: I would contact Mick
21 Condraci. Yes, I would.

22 MS. BELL: Do you have ultimate authority to
23 terminate?

24 MR. AXELSSON: As far as I know I do. I
25 never had the idea that I didn't.

1 MS. BELL: Okay. I just was curious.

2 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. It never crossed my
3 mind that I didn't.

4 MS. BELL: I have a question about
5 performance evaluations.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Yes, go. This is
7 Mike Kurcharski. Go ahead, Carrie. Take over for any
8 questions about crew or anything else.

9 MS. BELL: In terms of performance
10 evaluations, were you responsible for doing performance
11 evaluations on your crew?

12 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

13 MS. BELL: So everyone? Who did you have to
14 do performance evaluations for?

15 MR. AXELSSON: Well, I did the officers.
16 The chief mate did the crew.

17 MS. BELL: And so what was the process for
18 that? When you had to do an evaluation, what did you
19 have to do and how did you report that?

20 MR. AXELSSON: I didn't do many.

21 MS. BELL: But when you did, what was the
22 process?

23 MR. AXELSSON: They had a company sheet and
24 you brought them, sat them down and you discussed the
25 topics.

1 MS. BELL: How often did you have to do that
2 with each?

3 MR. AXELSSON: Not often.

4 MS. BELL: Yearly or every time they come
5 back on?

6 MR. AXELSSON: I wasn't there that long for
7 every year. But I certainly didn't give anybody an
8 evaluation on a one-tripper or a two-tripper. I didn't
9 know you long enough.

10 MS. BELL: So when you fill out an
11 evaluation form, where does it go from there?

12 MR. AXELSSON: Over to personnel.

13 MS. BELL: And do they give it back to you
14 and?

15 MR. AXELSSON: No.

16 MS. BELL: Ask you any questions about it?

17 MR. AXELSSON: No, ma'am. Not that I
18 recall.

19 MS. BELL: Any other collateral duties that
20 you had as master aside from your regular duties,
21 payroll, overtime, anything else that you had
22 responsibility for?

23 MR. AXELSSON: Payroll for sure.

24 MS. BELL: Payroll.

25 MR. AXELSSON: I did payroll, yes.

1 MS. BELL: Any other collateral duties aside
2 from your basic duties? Like I said, anything else
3 besides payroll, performance evaluations?

4 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

5 MS. BELL: What about records for doing
6 drills?

7 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, that was all kept on the
8 bridge. Yes. And chief mate pretty much kept all
9 that. We had a book right up there on the bridge that
10 we all signed and all that stuff. That was all part of
11 the ISN matrix. And all that stuff was copied every
12 quarter and sent to the office on everything we did
13 regarding that.

14 MS. BELL: So it was sent to the office
15 quarterly.

16 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, it was. It was a
17 quarterly. And we would make all the copies and every
18 quarter send everything into the office.

19 MS. BELL: Okay.

20 MR. AXELSSON: I think that went to John
21 Lawrence if I'm not mistaken. And over to port
22 operations, yes, operations and engineering.

23 MS. BELL: You mentioned earlier that the
24 date that you left TOTE was August 4th.

25 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

1 MS. BELL: When did you notify them that you
2 were leaving?

3 MR. AXELSSON: August 1st I think it was. I
4 was in San Juan. And I said that's it. I'll be on my
5 way. They notified me long before that that my
6 services were no longer required and I was this is just
7 as good a time.

8 MS. BELL: Prior to that, they had notified
9 you.

10 MR. AXELSSON: That was in June.

11 MS. BELL: So what kind of a conversation
12 was that and who did you have that conversation with?

13 MR. AXELSSON: That was Melissa Clark. She
14 said that my services were no longer required. It was
15 sometime in June. And do what you've got to do. If
16 there's something else you want to do, we understand.
17 Blah, blah, blah. That type of thing.

18 And I said, "Okay. Fine." So I went back
19 in July. Yes, sometime in July, middle of July. And
20 August 1st, I thought no more. I'll explore other
21 opportunities. And I went on my way.

22 MS. BELL: So how were you notified? Did
23 they give you a call or did they write you a letter?

24 MR. AXELSSON: Telephone. It was a
25 telephone call. They called me. I was home here.

1 MS. BELL: Did they give you an explanation?

2 MR. AXELSSON: As a matter of fact, we were
3 having my son's going away party, farewell party. I
4 had a living room, back deck and a kitchen full of
5 people. Hello. Okay. Fine.

6 MS. BELL: Did they give you an explanation?

7 MR. AXELSSON: No. And I didn't ask. I
8 knew I was temporary when I went there. They don't owe
9 me anything. I owe them nothing. And I have ill-will,
10 no grudge, no axe to grind. I understand. I have a
11 family. I've been out there a long time. I have two
12 sons away. My wife is home. I have a son with a
13 disability. I'm ready for some family time and explore
14 other opportunities. This is just as good a time as
15 any. And I did.

16 MS. BELL: But you went back for --

17 MR. AXELSSON: For three weeks.

18 MS. BELL: For three weeks.

19 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

20 MS. BELL: Is there a reason that you only
21 went for three weeks or you just decided?

22 MR. AXELSSON: I just decided that. I
23 wasn't going to go back in July. I didn't want to go
24 back. I was going to explore other opportunities. And
25 my wife can be persuasive. And I said okay.

1 I told them all. Last I knew I lived in
2 America and I still have some freedoms. And everybody
3 else seems to be coming and going, you know. So I just
4 thought this is a good time. So I did.

5 MS. BELL: So there was nothing that led you
6 to believe they were going to --

7 MR. AXELSSON: No.

8 MS. BELL: Did you have a performance
9 evaluation done on you?

10 MR. AXELSSON: No, I did not. No.

11 MS. BELL: You never had one.

12 MR. AXELSSON: No, ma'am.

13 MS. BELL: You want to ask a question.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So let me
15 understand. In June they called you and told you your
16 service is no longer needed.

17 MR. AXELSSON: After the El Faro. After the
18 El Faro, my services were no longer required. But
19 we're going to extend the courtesy that if you want to
20 go to Alaska you can. I said okay.

21 So she said, "You do what you've got to do.
22 We understand. If you're going to go someplace else,
23 we totally understand."

24 And I said, "Okay."

25 And she said, "Do what you've got to do."

1 But after the El Faro, that will be it."

2 And I said, "Okay. Fine. Do you need an
3 answer right now?"

4 She said, "No."

5 I said, "Okay. All right. Thank you."

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So after Alaska,
7 they're offering to you to go up to Alaska with the El
8 Faro. Is that the way I understand that?

9 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, they extended. They
10 said they're going to extend the courtesy to go to
11 Alaska. And I said, "Do you need to know right now?"

12 She said, "No."

13 I said, "Okay. I understand."

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: So you went back on
15 to the El Faro in July to do a normal 70.

16 MR. AXELSSON: I was planning on doing that,
17 70 days. I would have been off in September. I just
18 decided I'm going to move on. I'm going to retire and
19 move on and look at other opportunities. I don't know
20 why that's so hard to believe.

21 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Who said it was
22 hard to believe?

23 MR. AXELSSON: I don't know. You're all
24 looking at me like I'm a deer in the headlights.

25 (Simultaneous speaking)

1 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You're taking it
2 that way.

3 MR. AXELSSON: You're looking at me like I'm
4 a little bit touchy here. Are you out of your mind?

5 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No. But we need to
6 understand. We just need to understand the process
7 here. So going to Alaska, did you ask to go on the LNG
8 ships or anything like that?

9 MR. AXELSSON: No, I did not.

10 MS. BELL: Did you ever interview for any
11 other positions or put in for any other positions while
12 you were there for the year you were there at TOTE?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Do you mean at TOTE? Yes,
14 the only thing they asked for was -- I guess they
15 called me in May. I went to 2014 or somewhere in
16 there, June, July and asked for a résumé. I guess they
17 were interviewing people for those new ships. I said
18 okay. I sent it in. I sent it to Melissa Clark. And
19 to me that was the end of it. I didn't inquire. I
20 didn't give it another thought actually.

21 MS. BELL: Now that was before you started
22 at TOTE or was that a year after you'd been there?

23 MR. AXELSSON: No. That's a year after I'd
24 been there.

25 MS. BELL: Okay.

1 MR. AXELSSON: I hadn't been there a year.
2 No, I hadn't. I just started in September. So this is
3 May. That's summer I remember because it's going back
4 because they were still trying to figure out who they
5 were going to take to the new ships I guess or the
6 crewing.

7 MS. BELL: So they asked for a résumé.

8 MR. AXELSSON: They asked for a résumé, yes.

9 MS. BELL: And you knew that that was for
10 the LNG ships.

11 MR. AXELSSON: Yes, I knew that because
12 that's what they were doing at the time, collecting
13 résumés. And I said okay. I sent one in.

14 MS. BELL: Did you ever have to interview
15 for that position?

16 MR. AXELSSON: I did not.

17 MS. BELL: Do you know if anyone else
18 interviewed for that position?

19 MR. AXELSSON: I don't know that either. I
20 never asked. I didn't ask.

21 MS. BELL: But you didn't interview for the
22 original position that you were hired for, right?

23 MR. AXELSSON: I sent them a résumé.

24 MS. BELL: Right. So no formal interview
25 process.

1 MR. AXELSSON: No, ma'am.

2 MS. BELL: Would you say there is much
3 turnover there at TOTE?

4 MR. AXELSSON: No, I wouldn't think so.

5 MS. BELL: No.

6 MR. AXELSSON: No.

7 MS. BELL: I don't know if I already asked
8 you this, but do you know if anyone else put résumés in
9 for the LNG positions?

10 MR. AXELSSON: I just know some guys that I
11 talked to that they did. But I never asked the
12 outcome. To this day, I couldn't tell you who's over
13 there. I don't know. When I left in August, I didn't
14 keep in contact with anybody. When I left, I left.

15 MS. BELL: Yes. But they never came back to
16 you and said "You don't meet the criteria for this
17 position."

18 MR. AXELSSON: No, they never said anything
19 like that and I never asked.

20 MS. BELL: Do you have any thoughts about --
21 You said you don't know who they hired for those
22 positions.

23 MR. AXELSSON: No, I do not.

24 MS. BELL: So I guess you wouldn't have any
25 thoughts about that. Would you say that TOTE hires

1 fairly?

2 MR. AXELSSON: I don't have any reason to
3 think otherwise. I honestly don't. Like I said, I
4 don't have -- They've always been up front with me.
5 And they were crewing up there. That's fine. They're
6 entitled to that. They don't owe you anything and I
7 never entered into a position or a job where I thought
8 I was owed anything. There's no guarantees. I
9 understand that. And I hired as a temporary. I know
10 that, too.

11 MS. BELL: So what's the difference between
12 a permanent and temporary I mean in this type position?
13 I don't know. Benefits or --

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: This is Mike
15 Kucharski. It's hard for me to understand you were
16 temporary for two years essentially.

17 MR. AXELSSON: It looked that way, didn't
18 it? But if you want to know, that's what's I was told
19 that this is probably just going to be temporary. I
20 said okay.

21 MS. BELL: Did you work any other jobs while
22 you were working for TOTE temporarily?

23 MR. AXELSSON: No, I don't believe so. I
24 might have filled in with Citation Marine handling
25 lines up here at the shipyard. But that would be it.

1 MS. BELL: But not with MAERSK or anything
2 like that?

3 MR. AXELSSON: No, ma'am.

4 MS. BELL: Anybody else have any?

5 LCDR [REDACTED] What's the old expression?
6 You serve at the discretion of the --

7 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

8 LCDR [REDACTED] That's it. You tell the
9 master take a hike at any time.

10 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you have any
12 standing orders on the vessel?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Written standing
15 orders?

16 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Were they the same
18 as Captain Davidson used?

19 MR. AXELSSON: Mike Davidson and I, we had
20 the standing orders. And to keep some kind of
21 consistency so that there was nothing he said, she
22 said, he's here, he's not, we kept the same thing. And
23 we agreed on which we did all throughout. So we had
24 some kind of consistency.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Did you send those

1 to the company, the standing orders?

2 MR. AXELSSON: I did not.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Do you have a copy
4 of those?

5 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir, I did not take a
6 copy. I didn't take anything when I left there.

7 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How about on your
8 computer?

9 MR. AXELSSON: I don't have a computer. I
10 don't have a laptop.

11 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Do you recollect
12 anything from the standing orders?

13 MR. AXELSSON: No, sir. That was some time
14 ago.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: August.

16 MR. AXELSSON: I know. I don't.

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: What was your
18 overall impression of the lifeboats and life rafts?
19 Any problems with them?

20 MR. AXELSSON: No, the life rafts were
21 inspected annually. In fact, I think the annual was
22 coming up on those. And we just went through the
23 annuals for the lifeboats.

24 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No problems on the
25 lifeboats, the launching, the davits, anything?

1 MR. AXELSSON: No. No, sir. And I think --
2 We did not have any and we went through -- When I left,
3 Shad Harding (phonetic) was there to conduct another
4 one. And they did. And I left that day. Shad Harding
5 was down to look at the lifeboats. And I think two
6 weeks prior to that one of the new port engineers,
7 Bill, he was down. And he and I went through them,
8 the davits and stuff and looking at them. He was
9 climbing over and I was climbing over them and we did.
10 No, there weren't any. And Shad Harding was there.

11 LCDR [REDACTED] Do you know when
12 (Inaudible) is showing up?

13 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

14 LCDR [REDACTED] It's 3:02 p.m. over there.

15 MR. AXELSSON: Yes. Yes, that runs like
16 five minutes fast. We have that set five minutes fast.

17 LCDR [REDACTED] All right.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: What was your
19 overall assessment of the competency of the crew?

20 MR. AXELSSON: They were good seamen. I
21 didn't have exception with anybody.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: How about safety
23 culture on the ship?

24 MR. AXELSSON: Practices every day.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: You sailed with

1 MAERSK. You sailed with different companies. How
2 would you compare their safety culture? Was it
3 average? Better than average?

4 MR. AXELSSON: I think it was better than
5 average. We actually promoted that. Never asked
6 anybody to do something that they felt uncomfortable
7 doing. We didn't do that because in case somebody
8 would get hurt.

9 If you're uncomfortable starting it, you're
10 not going to be more comfortable doing it. So we paid
11 attention to all that. You want them comfortable. I
12 wanted them comfortable. When I say comfortable I mean
13 with what they're doing.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: It was reported
15 that the El Faro had a 15 degree list. Do you think
16 that was an average list?

17 MR. AXELSSON: Again, I'm not going to
18 speculate.

19 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Your professional
20 opinion. We're trying to put this together.

21 MR. AXELSSON: Wait a minute. We're talking
22 about an average?

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No, it was reported
24 to have a 15 degree list. Would you think that would
25 be an average of the rolls back and forth? Would you

1 think that would be a maximum? How would you generally
2 report that? We're trying to get to the bottom of a
3 possible flooding scenario.

4 MR. AXELSSON: I've had 10 to 15 degree
5 rolls. I wouldn't say it was all the time though.

6 LCDR [REDACTED] But a list is a permanent
7 condition.

8 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

9 LCDR [REDACTED] It's not permanent, but
10 it's a condition, right?

11 MR. AXELSSON: Yes.

12 LCDR [REDACTED] Rolling is one thing, but
13 a list is another.

14 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: The ship was
15 reported to have a 15 degree list. She's in a storm.
16 There's going to be a roll to it. Do you think the 15
17 degree list would be like an average type 15 degrees?
18 Or do you think it would be a maximum type?

19 MR. AXELSSON: I honestly don't want to
20 speculate on that. I haven't -- I don't want to offer
21 an opinion on that. I don't really know what to tell
22 you.

23 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: That's fair enough.
24 Anything you've thought this through now. We've talked
25 initially two weeks before. I understand speculation.

1 You don't want to speculate on anything.

2 But you're a professional mariner. You've
3 been out on these ships. Is there anything you know
4 has been in the news or maybe you don't? It's been in
5 the news that the ship was found in the upright
6 position down at the bottom.

7 MR. AXELSSON: I got that through her -- Is
8 it you who sent me the emails?

9 MS. BELL: What's that?

10 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No, that was --

11 MR. AXELSSON: That was Chris.

12 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: That was Katie.
13 But it was found in an upright position and the hull
14 was intact. Any thoughts? You know this ship. I mean
15 we know she went down. We know she lost propulsion.

16 MR. AXELSSON: I've thought about it, but I
17 honestly don't want to offer an opinion.

18 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Why not?

19 MR. AXELSSON: I just don't. With all due
20 respect, I don't want to offer an opinion as to why. I
21 don't know the answer. I don't honestly know. I have
22 wracked my brain. I'll tell you that don't doubt for a
23 one minute that I have not.

24 But do I know? No. I honestly don't.

25 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Nobody would ever

1 know exactly.

2 MR. AXELSSON: I know.

3 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: But anything you
4 could think of that possibly could --

5 MR. AXELSSON: I can't. I'm like -- I'm
6 dumbfounded.

7 LCDR [REDACTED] This is [REDACTED]
8 Maybe just to try to tag on this a little bit. I
9 understand that you don't want to speculate. But is
10 there anything at all that you could maybe -- what
11 things we should look at?

12 MR. AXELSSON: I thought about that as well.
13 And if I had that one thing I would tell you. I'd like
14 to know myself.

15 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay.

16 MR. AXELSSON: Honestly. And when I read
17 that in the email my whole thought was how did that
18 happen. How? Honestly.

19 LCDR [REDACTED] Well, they haven't gone
20 down with the ROV yet. That sight scan sonar that's a
21 different image altogether.

22 MR. AXELSSON: Right.

23 LCDR [REDACTED] Until they get the eyeball
24 on that wreckage, they don't know if it's actually
25 laying a little bit on its side or if it's actually --

1 You don't know until you get ROV down there. You don't
2 know.

3 MR. AXELSSON: I don't know --

4 LCDR [REDACTED] It looks like it's resting
5 on the bottom, but that's a side scan image. That's
6 not video or a picture.

7 MR. AXELSSON: I honestly don't know.

8 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Any other
9 questions?

10 MS. BELL: Did you know Captain Davidson
11 before you started at TOTE?

12 MR. AXELSSON: Never met him before.

13 MS. BELL: Okay. Did you guys ever have any
14 conversations about concerns you had, just general
15 concerns about the company or the ship?

16 MR. AXELSSON: No, ma'am. The only
17 conversation he and I had regarding that was he was
18 upset. I guess he wasn't invited either to go to the
19 new ones. And he called me one day and wanted to know
20 if I wanted to get into filing a grievance with the
21 union. And I said no. I do not. I do not want to be
22 a part of that.

23 And he said, "Why not?"

24 And I said, "Because I already know. They
25 have a new hull. The union will tell you the same

1 thing. They have selective hiring. There is no
2 guarantees, Mike."

3 And he said, "Are you alright with that?"

4 And I said, "Yes, I am. There are no
5 guarantees here. You knew that. I knew that. They
6 have selective hiring. It's their ship. They can do
7 what they want."

8 MS. BELL: Was that conversation before or
9 after you left?

10 MR. AXELSSON: That was before I left. I
11 was home when he called me.

12 MS. BELL: Okay. Do you know if he followed
13 through with that?

14 MR. AXELSSON: That I don't know. It never
15 came up again. And I think when I went back, it never
16 came up. And he and I still shook hands. And he and I
17 still had our conversations. And he and I still --
18 Everything was professional.

19 MS. BELL: Did he know that you were
20 resigning?

21 MR. AXELSSON: No, he did not.

22 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Mike Kucharski. Do
23 you know what the plans were for him? Did he discuss
24 that?

25 MR. AXELSSON: No, he did not and I did not

1 ask. I figured if he wanted to tell me he would. I
2 didn't pry.

3 MS. BELL: We kept you all the way up to the
4 last second. We really appreciate.

5 MR. AXELSSON: I've got to get out.

6 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: 1:05 p.m. we'll
7 stop the interview.

8 (Whereupon, at 1:05 p.m., the above-entitled
9 matter was concluded.)
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9

C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: El Faro Incident
NTSB Accident No. DCA16MM001
Interview of Eric Axelsson
Cape May, NJ

DATE: 11-03-15

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 171 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.



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TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
6	7	WORKED AT THE	WORKED AT THE WHARF
9	19	FLOOR	FORWARD
11	6	GOOD	BIG OR LARGE
12	7	CONVERSATION	CONVERSION
14	9	USI	USPACIFIC
14	18	FRESH	CREST
18	20	FOUR	FORE
19	7	SEVEN	SOME
20	1	MARSK	MARSK LINE LIMITED
20	2	TRAVEL	MARSK COLORADO

If, to the best of your knowledge, no corrections are needed kindly circle the statement "no corrections needed" and initial in the space provided.

NO CORRECTIONS NEEDED.

Initials

BROR EAC
Printed Name of Person providing the above information

Signature of Person providing the above information

11-22-15

Date

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
20	9	LEAD FEAR	LEADER CRANE
21	15	UNCONTROLLABLE IS	NO CONTROLLABLE PITCH
22	22	SIX - FOOT	SIX HUNDRED FOOT
23	25	NEAREST RECOLLECTION =	I WENT UP AND HE WENT DOWN
		CORRECTION: RECALL THE CAPTAIN WAS SUPPOSED TO GO DOWN	
		BUT I BELIEVE - HE DID ON AND FINISHED THE 3-DAY	
		EXERCISE.	
32	5	FORWARD	FOUNDER
92	11	GM	GM
97	15	KEEL	HEEL

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Bror Eric Axelsson AH

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TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

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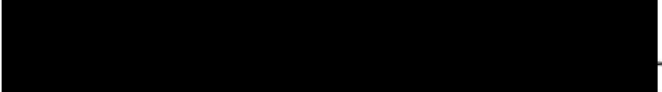
PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
103	20	HEEL	HEEL
103	22	ANTI-HEELING	ANTI-HEELING
108	14	5.5	1.5
117	22	IT I	WE
117	22	THEY	THE COMPANY
118	7	THEM	COMPANY
120	25	BIDGE	BIDGE ALARMS
121	10	BOTTOM FUEL	BOWL VOYAGE
122	23	BOMB BIDGE	BOWL VOYAGE
137	9	ILL-WILL	NO TILL WILL

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Printed Name of Person providing the above information


Signature of Person providing the above information

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TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
153	6	1:05 PM	3:05 PM
153	8	1:05 PM	3:05 PM

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Date

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TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
6	7	WORKED AT THE	WORKED AT THE WHARF
9	19	FLOOR	FORWARD
11	6	GOOD	BIG OR LARGE
12	7	CONVERSATIONAL	CONVERSION
14	9	UST	UST PACIFIC
14	18	FRESH	CREST
18	20	FOUR	FORE
19	7	SEVEN	SOME
20	1	MAERSK	MAERSK LINE LIMITED
20	7	TRAVEL	MAERSK COLORADO

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	SUGGESTED CORRECTED WORDING	NTSB RESPONSE
6	7	Worked at the	Worked at the wharf	Do not agree. Transcript correct as is
9	19	Floor	Forward	AGREE
11	6	Good	Big or Large	AGREE with "Big"
12	7	Conversational	Conversion	AGREE
14	9	UST	UST Pacific	AGREE
18	20	Four	Fore	AGREE
19	7	Seven	Some	AGREE
20	1	Maersk	Maersk Line Limited	AGREE
20	7	Travel	Maersk Colorado	AGREE

NTSB RESPONSE (In Bold Blue) TO TABLE OF CORRECTIONS

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

NTSB RESPONSE (In Bold Blue) TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO
TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
20	9	LEAD YEAR	LERHER CRANE
21	15	UNCONTROLLABLE	NO CONTROLLABLE PITCH
22	22	SIX-FOOT	SIX HUNDRED FOOT
28	25	NEAREST RECOLLECTION =	I WENT UP AND HE WENT DOWN
		CORRECTION: RECALL THE CAPTAIN WAS SUPPOSED TO GO DOWN	
		BUT I BELIEVE - HE STAYED ON AND FINISHED THE 3-DAY	
		EXERCISE.	
32	5	FODDERED	FODDER
92	11	GN	GM
97	15	KEEL	HEEL

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	SUGGESTED CORRECTED WORDING	NTSB RESPONSE
20	9	Lead Year	Lerher Crane	AGREE
21	15	Uncontrollable	No controllable pitch	DO NOT AGREE. Sounds like "controllable"
21	22	Six Foot	Six Hundred Foot	DO NOT AGREE. Transcript correct as is
28	25	Nearest recollection: "I went up and he went down." Correction: Recall the Captain was supposed to go down but I believe - he staid on and finished the 3-day exercise"		DO NOT AGREE. Listened to recording and transcript is correct as is.
32	5	Foddered	Fodder	AGREE
92	11	GN	GM	AGREE
97	15	Keel	Heel	AGREE

NTSB RESPONSE (In Bold Blue) TO TABLE OF CORRECTIONS

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON

NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER		CORRECTED WORDING
103	20	KEEL	HEEL
103	22	ANTI-KEELING	ANTI-HEELING
108	14	5.5	.5
117	22	I	WE
117	22	THEY	THE COMPANY
118	7	THEM	COMPANY
120	25	BILGE	BILGE ALARMS
121	10	BOTTOM FUEL	BON VOYAGE
122	23	BOMB BILGE	BON VOYAGE
137	9	ILL-WILL	NO ILL WILL

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	SUGGESTED CORRECTED WORDING	NTSB RESPONSE
103	20	Keel	Heel	AGREE
103	22	Anti-Keeling	Anti-Heeling	AGREE
108	14	5.5	.5	AGREE
117	22	I	We	AGREE
117	22	They	The Company	DO NOT AGREE. Transcript correct as is
118	7	Them	Company	DO NOT AGREE. Transcript correct as is
119	25	Bilge	Bilge Alarms	DO NOT AGREE. Transcript correct as is
121	10	Bottom Fuel	Bon Voyage	AGREE
122	23	Bomb Bilge	Bon Voyage	AGREE
137	9	Ill-Will	No Ill Will	AGREE

NTSB RESPONSE (In Bold Blue) TO TABLE OF CORRECTIONS

BROR AXELSSON

TAKEN ON


NOVEMBER 3, 2015

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
153	6	<i>1:05 PM</i>	3:05 pm
153	8	<i>1:05 PM</i>	3: 05 pm

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	SUGGESTED CORRECTED WORDING	NTSB RESPONSE
153	6	1:05 PM	3:05 PM	AGREE
153	8	1:05 PM	3:05 PM	AGREE

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11-22-15
Date

19 -NTSB Response to OMS Axlesson Transcript Errata - Reformatted

19. OMS Axelsson Transcript Errata